

September 19, 1998

Kaabneh back home after meeting with King

AMMAN (J.T.) — Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Mirai Kaabneh said that His Majesty King Hussein enjoys good health, and sends greetings to the Armed Forces. He said that the King will return home after completing medical treatment. Field Marshal Kaabneh made this statement in Amman after a visit to the U.S. where he called on the King and delivered best wishes for a speedy recovery from the Armed Forces.

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Kuwait to grant transit visas to Iranian pilgrims

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait on Saturday said it would grant transit visas to Iranian pilgrims travelling to the Muslim holy cities of Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia, a local Arabic daily said. The visa will allow the pilgrims a stay of between three and five days in Kuwait before moving on to Saudi Arabia. Al Qabas newspaper said. The pilgrims will arrive at Kuwait's Shuwaik port and be taken by bus to a "pilgrim village," where they will be accommodated, some 20 kilometres in the west of Kuwait City, an interior ministry spokesman told AFP. It is the first time since the start of the Iran-Iraq War in 1980 that Kuwait has granted transit visas to Iranian pilgrims. In August, Iranian pilgrims were allowed to cross into Iraq to visit Shiite Muslim holy sites for the first time since the start of the Iran-Iraq war.

Bilateral trade panel agrees on 88 new products

We hope to see the day when Jordanian-Palestinian decisions do not need Israeli approval — Tarawneh

By Ghafiah Alul

AMMAN — Seeking to boost bilateral trade ties, the Higher Jordanian-Palestinian Committee Saturday agreed to include 88 new commodities in the list of products exchanged between the two sides.

The Palestinians will present the proposed commodities to Israel for approval within the coming two weeks.

"We hope to see the day when our joint decisions are final, but with regards to the current situation we want to see the joint Palestinian-Jordanian cooperation at its highest levels," Prime Minister Faysal Tarawneh told reporters following the meeting.

The aim is to achieve a natural exchange of goods and services between Jordan and Palestine.

National Authority pledged to follow up on a Japan-funded project to rehabilitate and reconstruct the King Hussein Bridge — a process expected to ensure a smooth flow of goods between the two sides.

Jordan has long complained of poor trade exchanges with the Palestinian self-rule areas because of strict Israeli measures impeding the flow of goods across the King Hussein Bridge.

Israel still controls the only two bridges connecting Jordan to the Palestinian territories.

Trade levels between Jordan and the PNA amounted to approximately \$48 million in 1997, while in the past five months, trade exchanges between the two countries did not exceed \$13 million, according to Jordan's Chamber of Commerce.

At the meeting the two sides agreed to identify ways to ensure that goods are directly exported to either destination without any interference from



Prime Minister Faysal Tarawneh meets PLO official Mahmoud Abbas in Amman on Saturday (AFP photo)

Israel. "Direct trade between Jordan and the PNA is the ideal way to enhance and improve business and trade relations," according to the memorandum of understanding signed by both

sides following the meeting. The memorandum which covered cooperation in the economic, trade, agricultural and transport fields said both countries agreed to set up warehouses at the border

crossing of King Hussein Bridge in order to facilitate the flow of goods and to offer each other credit facilities to import-export operations as well as encourage

(Continued on page 3)

Water crisis probe continues: Water Authority chief, assistant arrested

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — Water Authority Secretary General Munther Khleifat and his assistant Sa'ad Bakri were detained by authorities Saturday in connection with the water contamination crisis that began in early July and affected most of West Amman.

"Our investigations are continuing and we might arrest other officials if our investigations prove that they were involved in the water problem," Amman Prosecutor Mohammad Harahsheh said.

Khleifat and Bakri have been put in detention for 14 days at Jweideh Prison pending further investigations into the case, Harahsheh told the Jordan

Times.

Last month Harahsheh launched a legal probe into the water crisis after receiving a 100-page report prepared by a special investigation commission formed to determine the cause/s behind the water contamination incident and who were the people responsible for the crisis.

In July residents of West Amman, who receive most of their water from the Zai Water Treatment Plant, complained that the water was murky and foul smelling.

The water crisis led to the resignation of Water Minister Munther Haddadin.

With the latest two arrests a total of nine officials have been detained since the commission's report was

presented to the prosecutor general.

Last month, the Society for Consumer Protection filed a lawsuit at the Amman Magistrate Court against Haddadin and other water officials.

But the court ruled that trying ministers does not fall within its jurisdiction.

According to the Constitution, a higher council formed of senators and judges is the only authority to try ministers, but only after indictment by a two-thirds majority of the Lower House.

The Magistrate Court however, will continue looking into the case against other officials, judicial sources said. The next court session is set for Oct. 11.

Ross wraps up fruitless mission

Palestinians put the blame on Israel for failure

GAZA CITY (AFP) — U.S. envoy Dennis Ross wound up a largely fruitless 10-day peace mission to the Middle East Saturday amid Palestinian charges that "double-dealing" by the Israeli government had led to its failure.

Ross was set to hold a last meeting with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, witnesses here said.

He was also due to make a final call on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu before returning to the U.S., Israeli Radio reported.

But Mahmoud Abbas, the number two in the Palestine Liberation Organisation, said that despite "huge efforts" by Ross no files had been closed during the shuttle negotiations.

"I cannot deny that [Ross] has made huge efforts to make viewpoints meet, but I cannot say that we have closed a single one

of the files," he told reporters in Amman.

The Palestinian cabinet put the blame squarely on the Israeli government.

"The mission of Dennis Ross has not achieved the progress hoped for in the peace process and in the negotiations," the cabinet said in a statement issued after a meeting late on Friday.

"Israeli manoeuvring and double-dealing has beset the mission of the U.S. envoy," it said.

Ross, who had delayed his departure for a day for what a U.S. embassy official called "further technical discussion," said after meeting Arafat on Friday that he was making "headway."

The United States has been trying unsuccessfully to broker a compromise on its proposal that Israel withdraw from 13 per cent

of the West Bank in return for stricter security guarantees from the Palestinians.

The proposal has long been accepted by the Palestinians but has been repeatedly rebuffed by Netanyahu.

The Palestinian cabinet statement also launched a broadside against the activities of Jewish settlers in the West Bank accusing the Israeli government of responsibility for the creation of "an armed militia."

"The Palestinian leadership holds the Israeli government completely responsible for the crimes of settlers which it has armed and turned into an armed militia," the cabinet said.

It followed Thursday's killing near the West Bank town of Ramallah of a 16-year-old Palestinian student by a Jewish settler who later surrendered to police.

Avshalom Ladan, 38, a

Jew from the settlement of Dolev, confessed to shooting "in legitimate self-defence" at a group of Palestinian youths who were throwing stones at his vehicle.

Israeli police were awaiting the results of a Palestinian postmortem before determining whether it was a bullet from Ladan's gun that killed the student and wounded a second.

Top Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat also said that he had sent a letter to Ross in which he had asked the U.S. administration to pressure Israel to act against "Israeli terrorists."

Amid the stream of condemnation from the Palestinian side, Israeli troops fired tear gas and rubber-coated bullets in a second day of clashes with stone-throwing Palestinians in the West Bank town of Al Bireh, witnesses said.

The clashes broke out as

several hundred demonstrators took part in a march organised by the students' union of nearby Bir Zeit University to protest the recent killings of the Palestinian student and two leaders of the militant Hamas group, all of whom were from the Al Bireh area, the witnesses said.

There were no reports of casualties.

Saturday's march followed more violent confrontations the previous day in which nearly 100 Palestinians were injured, three of them critically, in a demonstration organised by Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement.

An estimated five thousand Hamas supporters held a largely peaceful rally on Saturday at a school in Hebron in the south of the West Bank, witnesses said.

Five Iranians freed by Taliban in goodwill gesture

ISLAMABAD (R) — The Taliban militia on Saturday freed five Iranians in a goodwill gesture to ease tense relations between the two neighbours and asked Tehran to free Taliban from Iranian jails.

Taliban spokesman Abdul Hai Muteen said the five were among "military" drivers captured when the militia seized the northern town of Mazar-e-Sharif from opposition factions last month.

"They were freed this afternoon as a sign of our willingness to improve relations with Tehran," Muteen told Reuters.

The five were flown to a military airport outside the Pakistani capital and met by Iranian embassy officials who took them away in a car. They made no statement.

The radical Sunni Muslim militia, which controls most of Afghanistan, and its powerful Shiite neighbour have been locked in a war of words since the Taliban admitted that nine missing Iranian diplomats were killed by "renegade" Taliban in

the fall of Mazar-e-Sharif. The movement's senior spokesman, Wakil Ahmad, said in a telephone conversation from Kandahar that the five men were freed after talks with a Pakistani delegation.

"Now we will see what kind of goodwill gesture Iran will make," he told the Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) news agency.

Ahmad repeated Taliban allegations that Afghan refugees in Iran have been mistreated during tension caused by the Taliban slaying of nine Iranian diplomats.

He also accused Iranian-backed militia of taking away 15 Taliban prisoners when the militia captured the central town of Bamian one week ago and demanded their release.

"Our two demands from Iran, which we made to the Pakistani delegation, are that they are behaving badly towards Afghan refugees in Iran and this should stop, and that 15 Taliban prisoners taken from Bamian to Iran and any

others should be set free," Ahmad said.

The Taliban has accused Iran of killing 56 Afghan refugees and of jailing others among the one million refugee community on Iranian soil. But the official Iranian news agency IRNA on Saturday denied these allegations.

The release was proposed by Pakistan, one of only three countries which recognise the Taliban as the government in Kabul. Iran backs the government of Berhanuddin Rabbani, which was ousted by the Taliban in September 1996.

IAF calls for restraint on both sides

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Islamic Action Front (IAF) on Saturday condemned the crime against Iranian diplomats at Mazar-e-Sharif and warned against the consequences of engaging in war "which could be more devastating than the first and second Gulf wars."

In a statement issued on Saturday, the IAF called on Iran and Afghanistan to withdraw their military forces back to their original locations, and mobilise the Muslim forces and resources in fighting against the enemies of Islamic Nation.

The IAF called on Pakistan to exert good

offices in patching up the differences between Iran and Afghanistan, and appealed to the Islamic nations, peoples, organisations and political figures to use their good offices to avert a military standoff.

Recalling Iran's efforts in bringing closer Muslim views, the statement called on Iran to utilise its leadership of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) for the benefit of the Islamic Nation in order to spare the consequences of an international conspiracy against the Islamic World.

Iraq 'entirely satisfied' with U.N. chief's proposals to end crisis

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq is "entirely satisfied" with U.N. chief Kofi Annan's proposals to resolve the latest crisis over weapons inspections and will "very soon" send a high-level delegation to New York, an official said Saturday.

"We have heard the proposals of Mr. Kofi Annan and we are entirely satisfied with them," presidential advisor General Amer Al Saadi told a news conference in Baghdad.

"Contact are continuing between the U.N. secretary general and Iraq through his special envoy in Baghdad, Prakash Shah, and Iraq will 'very soon' send a high-level delegation to New York to meet" Annan, Saadi said.

Meanwhile, U.N. monitoring of military and industrial sites to Iraq is continuing normally, a U.N. official said here on Saturday, amid threats by the country's leadership to break all cooperation with weapons inspectors.

"The monitoring system is going on. The monitoring experts are always here," said Nils Carlstrom, director of the U.N. Special Commission's monitoring and verification centre.

"Cooperation with the Iraqis is going on, on a professional level," he told AFP.

On Aug. 5, Iraq suspended cooperation with U.N. inspectors and on Wednesday it threatened to break

off all cooperation unless the U.N. Security Council cancels a resolution to scrap regular reviews of the eight-year-old sanctions.

But the United States on Friday warned that unless Iraq reversed its decision new steps would have to be taken to ensure Baghdad's compliance with U.N. resolutions.

The embargo imposed after the 1990 invasion of Kuwait can only be lifted once UNSCOM experts certify the elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and long-range missiles.

Iraq says that it no longer holds such weapons and that the sanctions should be lifted immediately.

Arabs draft resolution demanding probe for U.S. attack on Sudan

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — In spite of U.S. objections, Arab states began drafting a resolution Friday demanding the Security Council authorise a fact-finding mission to investigate U.S. claims that a Sudanese factory it bombed last month was making chemical weapons.

Arab ambassadors met at the United Nations to work out the details of the resolution, which Bahrain — the lone Arab on the council — was to begin circulating among council members next week, said the

Sudanese ambassador, Elfatih Erwa.

If the United States has nothing to hide, he said, it should approve the investigation.

Otherwise, Washington can veto the resolution, he said in an interview. "Let them say to the whole world 'we do what we want to do. We don't have to obey international law.'" Washington says the Al Shifa plant produced chemical weapons and was linked to Osama bin Laden, whom U.S. officials suspect in the U.S.

embassy bombings in Africa. Sudan says the plant produced medicines and veterinary drugs.

Sudan requested an investigation into the U.S. claims immediately after the Aug. 20 attack, but the council shelved the matter after initial discussions.

The ambassadors launched the resolution a day after the Arab League condemned the bombing as an "act of aggression against Sudan, a dangerous violation of its sovereignty

(Continued on page 3)

SLA ready to pull out of Jezzine

MARIYOUN (AFP) — The head of the Israeli-armed South Lebanon Army (SLA) said Saturday the militia was ready to withdraw from Jezzine, a Christian enclave on the edge of the Israeli-occupied zone in Lebanon.

"The South Lebanon Army is prepared to pull out from Jezzine if the Lebanese state takes over and commits to banning access to armed [anti-Israeli] groups and preventing the region being used as a base for operations against us," General Antoine Lahad told AFP.

Lahad also said that new restrictions imposed on movements of residents in the Jezzine region were

prompted by "security considerations" and did not mean that Jezzine was being assimilated into the Israeli-occupied buffer region.

He insisted that Jezzine was not considered part of the zone.

An SLA source said last week that some members of the population were accused of being involved in bomb attacks against Israel or the SLA by helping the Lebanese security services "which support the terrorists."

Jezzine has enjoyed an unusual status since 1985 following the withdrawal of the Israeli army to an 850-square-kilometre border strip it maintains as a

"security zone" against cross-border attacks.

It was first placed under the control of the Vatican to prevent it from becoming part of the war zone and a Vatican official resided there until 1990 when the last representative from Rome died.

So far this year, 27 SLA militiamen members have been killed and 31 injured in south Lebanon, mostly by the Hizbollah which spearheads the campaign to oust Israeli troops from the country.

Hizbollah last week blew up four bodyguards working for Joseph Karam, the SLA's new leader in Jezzine who was appointed by Lahad last month.

Death toll rises to 28 in latest Algerian violence

ALGIERS (R) — A bomb in an open-air market killed 26 people and wounded 125 in the latest violence in Algeria, while security forces also gunned down two presumed Muslim rebels, local media reported on Saturday.

"According to the latest report released by security services on Saturday afternoon, 26 people died and 125 others were wounded, including 39 in a serious condition... following the bomb blast in Tiarat, the official APS news agency said in a brief statement.

Health Minister Yahia Guiddoum visited the wounded in hospital in the market town of Tiarat, some 230 km southwest of Algiers.

The minister, who was accompanied by other senior officials including Minister of Religious Affairs Bouabdellah

Ghlammallah, would attend the burial ceremony for the dead, APS said, but gave no other details.

El Watan daily earlier reported the bomb, a home-made device, was apparently "hidden in a gas cylinder and put under a vegetable display" in the marketplace, where it exploded early on Friday evening.

Markets in Muslim Algeria are usually crowded with shoppers, particularly women and children, on Fridays and have been frequent targets for bomb attacks blamed by the authorities on rebels.

La Nouvelle Republique newspaper reported on Saturday that security forces killed two "terrorists" in Beni Amrane village on Friday. The village is located in Bouira province, some 120 kms east of Algiers.

The two "terrorists," the term used by Algerian officials for Muslim rebels, were members of an armed group that killed a farmer and wounded another in the area, it said.

Algeria has been torn by violence since early 1992 after the authorities cancelled a general election in which Islamists had taken a commanding lead.

The government has blamed the killings on Islamic organisations, especially the Armed Islamic Group (GIA). Human rights bodies have also blamed militia with links to the military for murders, torture, and disappearances.

Last Tuesday, a United Nations fact-finding mission sent to Algeria to look into the six years of violence published a report that condemned extremism but said Algerian security forces had to respect human rights.



PROTEST AGAINST POLLUTION: Greenpeace activists in a dinghy boat Saturday raise a banner saying "Stop Polluting Lebanon's Coast in front of a 21-metre high coastal waste dump in the southern Lebanese port city of Sidon. The activists and journalists in dinghy boats provided by the Greenpeace ship 'Sirius', which is visiting Sidon, drove along the shores between the Sidon waste dump and the Ghazieh industrial zone to document the sources of industrial pollution (AP photo)

Turkey seeks Security Council membership

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey will seek to become a member of the United Nations Security Council in 2001 when some council members are scheduled to be replaced by others, a Turkish diplomat was quoted as saying Saturday.

"We will enter elections for Security Council membership in 2001," Turkey's ambassador at the U.N., Volkan Vural, told Turkish newspapers.

Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz and Foreign Minister Ismail Cem will represent Turkey in next week's United Nations General Assembly session, he said. Vural said their talks would include lobbying efforts for Security Council membership.

Hamas rally in Hebron ends peacefully

HEBRON (AFP) — An estimated five thousand supporters of the militant Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) held a largely peaceful rally at a school in this divided city on Saturday, witnesses said.

The Hamas supporters gathered at the Ibn Rushd school in the town and listened to a speech by the group's leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, speaking by telephone from his base in Gaza, the witnesses said.

Yassin called for the continuation of Palestinian resistance to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories.

Members of the audience held banners saying: "Revenge is for the Izzeddine Al Qassem Brigades," referring to Hamas's military wing and: "Continuing resistance is the real response to the crimes of our enemies."

Other Hamas supporters burned Israeli and U.S. flags but no violence was reported and neither Israeli nor Palestinian security forces were in evidence at the meeting.

Hebron is often a flash-point for violence — most of the town is controlled by the Palestinian Authority but several hundred militant Jewish settlers occupy enclaves in the heart of the town where Israel retains control.

Father of Lockerbie victim in Libya for talks on trial

LONDON (AFP) — A father whose daughter died in the bombing of a PanAm jet over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988, was heading for Tripoli Saturday to discuss the trial of the two Libyan suspects.

Jim Swire, spokesman for U.K. Families Flight 103, which represents families of the victims, was to hold talks with Libyan officials.

Libyans Abdul Basset Ali El Megrabi and Al Amine Khalifa Hitham are accused of carrying out the bombing over the Scottish village which killed all 259 people on board the Boeing 747 and 11 people on the ground.

Britain and the United States gave the go-ahead in August

for a trial on neutral territory, in the Netherlands, on condition that it take place before Scottish judges and according to Scottish law.

Swire left London earlier Saturday with Robert Black, a law professor at Edinburgh University.

"The trip is being made following an invitation, passed through the Libyan Interests Section of the Saudi Arabian Embassy in London, to travel to the North African state for discussions," said a spokesman for Swire.

"The trip is being made as part of their ongoing commitment to the search for truth and justice into the Lockerbie bombing."

Iran adjourns German businessman's trial

TEHRAN (AFP) — An Iranian court decided on Saturday to adjourn until Thursday the trial of a German businessman who had been condemned to death for having sexual relations with a Muslim woman.

The president of the appeals court made no decision on the fate of Helmut Hofer and the Iranian woman with whom he is accused of having an affair, state radio reported, citing a court official.

Hofer appeared in the court in the presence of the German ambassador, state radio said earlier, but gave no other information about the case or the woman.

Hofer, 57, was condemned to death in January under a law banning sexual relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, but Iran's Supreme Court threw out the sentence in May and ordered a retrial after defence lawyers said Hofer had converted to Islam at the time of the offence.

The new trial began on July 22 but the court immediately adjourned after the woman failed to turn up for the hearing.

According to press reports, police arrested Hofer at Tehran airport when he was found with a 26-year-old Iranian woman identified as "Vadideh Gh" who had arrived to greet him.

During his initial trial, Hofer said he was ready to marry Vadideh. His lawyer, Malek-Hushang Qahari, said in July that Hofer had become a Shiite Muslim and that he was now known as Helmut-Reza Hofer.

The issue reignited tensions between Bonn and Tehran, whose relations were strained over a German court verdict in 1997 accusing Iranian leaders of having ordered the assassination of Kurdish dissidents in a Berlin restaurant in 1992.

However, Iran insists the Hofer case is a legal issue and has asked Germany, which stages legislative elections a week on Sunday, not to politicise it.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraqi woman murdered in Amman

AMMAN (J.T.) — A 20-year-old Iraqi woman was murdered Friday at her residence in Al Rashid Housing Estate by a 20-year-old man, identified as S.M.M., police said yesterday. They added that the victim, Hind Jaber Mubsen Hassan, was killed during a robbery attempt. Police sources added that S.M.M. hit the victim and then strangled her. The prosecutor general is investigating the crime.

Rocket hits Turkish police station

ISTANBUL (R) — Unknown attackers fired a rocket at an Istanbul police station on Saturday, Anadolu news agency said. The agency said there were no immediate reports of casualties when a rocket hit the building around 1 p.m. (1000 GMT) in the city's Fatih district, a stronghold of Islamist sympathisers. It gave no further details. Kurdish guerrillas, far leftists and Islamist militants have all carried out similar attacks in the past.

Floods kill four in Sudan

KHARTOUM (AP) — Torrential rains unleashed floods in northern Sudan, killing four people and leaving thousands homeless, a Sudanese relief official said Saturday. The rains lasted three hours Friday evening, and relief teams could not travel roads to the stricken areas until Saturday, said Mohammed Titawi, spokesman for the government's Relief Committee. Relief workers believed at least 600 homes were destroyed and thousands were left without shelter. Titawi said in a statement carried by state-run Omdurman Radio. Four people died, he said.

Lebanese to U.S. to face forgery charges

ASUNCION (AP) — A Lebanese citizen in custody of FBI agents left Paraguay for New York on Saturday to face charges of forging U.S. documents for the Hizbollah guerrilla force, police said. Mohammad Garib Makki, 39, was detained Thursday at Ciudad del Este, 390 kilometres east of Paraguay's capital, Asuncion. Garib Makki faces charges of forging U.S. passports, visas and immigration green cards for Lebanon-based Hizbollah, an Iran-backed Shiite Muslim force, a Paraguayan police spokesman said. Garib Makki had a U.S. passport. The spokesman did not indicate whether it was forged. Ciudad del Este, near Paraguay's borders with Brazil and Argentina, has a large Muslim community.

Egypt backs Palestinian plan to declare statehood

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt said Saturday the Palestinians have the right to declare an independent state as there has been no progress in the peace process.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu "cannot prevent the Palestinian people from moving towards self-determination" if the peace process is stalled, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa told reporters Saturday at Cairo airport before leaving for New York to attend a session of the U.N. General Assembly.

Musa was responding to statements by Netanyahu that a Palestinian declaration of statehood would void the Palestinian-Israeli interim peace agreements.

The Palestinians have said they will declare an independent Palestinian state in May 1999, the date set for the

conclusion of a final peace accord. The speaker of the Palestinian parliament, Ahmed Qureia, said Friday that Palestinians might delay their unilateral declaration of independence "for a month or two" if negotiations with the Israelis make progress.

Israel has warned that a Palestinian declaration of statehood would have serious consequences.

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat is

expected to try to muster support for a declaration of statehood during next week's session of the General Assembly.

If Netanyahu "prevents the Palestinians from moving ahead [with the declaration], and he also does not implement the existing agreements, this will cause great frustration for the Palestinian people who will inevitably protect their rights," Musa warned.

Yilmaz steps up fight against alleged state-mafia ties

ANKARA (AP) — Troubled by allegations of cozy relationships between public officials and mobsters, Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz proposed a series of new laws Saturday to fight organised crime.

Since March, authorities have arrested a number of bosses and

lower-ranking members of Turkish mafias on wide-ranging charges alleging murder plots and racketeering.

"It is impossible to solve other problems of the country without eradicating gangs with all their extensions within the state," Yilmaz said.

Yilmaz said his government has drafted bills that would allow amnesty for informants, make it easier to investigate and prosecute public officials, and toughen punishment for gang members.

Lawmakers are expected to discuss the proposals after they return from

summer recess in October. "I call on all parties to support those bills," Yilmaz said.

The state-mafia ties have been a key issue since 1996, when a car crash injured a legislator and killed a police official and a fugitive terrorist — all riding together in the same car.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 4773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:10 Cartoon — The Pink Panther
15:20 Cartoon — The Pumpkin Patch
15:30 The Adventures of the Black Stallion
16:00 The American Chart Show
17:00 N.B.A.
18:00 Drama — Bonne Esperance
19:00 Le Journal
19:15 French Programme — Science Magazine (E-M6)
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Life's Most Embarrassing Moments
20:00 World Net
20:30 Talk Show — Challenges
21:00 Drama — Renegade
22:00 News in English
22:30 Mini-series — "The Shadow Trader (Ep. 1)"
23:59 End of T. X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:00 Fajr
05:17 (Sunrise) Duha
11:29 Dhuhur
14:58 'Asr
17:41 Maghreb
18:58 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweidheh, Tel. 5920740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 4632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590
Terra Sancta Church Tel.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

4622366
Anglican Church Tel. 4624853/4624811
St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 4771751
Amman International Church Tel. 5865897
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5688404
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 5811295
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932
St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440
Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4646138
Church of Presentation, Sweidheh Tel. 5920146
The Uniate Catholic Church Tel. 4624757
The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190
Evangelical Free Church Tel. 4892679
The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052
The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 4771331
The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 4775261

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Moderate weather conditions will

prevail with temperatures lower than average by about three degrees centigrade and winds northwesterly moderate. In Agaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.
Min./Max. temp.
Amman 17/27
Agaba 24/34
Deserts 16/30
Jordan Valley 22/33
Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 28, Agaba 35 Humidity readings: Amman 43 per cent, Agaba 52 per cent.
Following are the highest temperatures expected today in the following areas:
Ajloun 25
Jerash 32
Um Qays 30
Madaba 30
Petra 32
Dead Sea 37

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

Firas pharmacy 5661912
Al Asema pharmacy 4637055
Nabrouh pharmacy 4623672
Al Salam pharmacy 4636730
Yaouub pharmacy 4644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 4637660
Najib pharmacy 5347632
IRBID:
Dr. Issam Al Salih 246858
Al Quds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Issa Al Omari 901266
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417
EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre 4637111
Civil Defence Department 5661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 4630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192 4621111, 4637777
Fire Brigade 4617101
Blood Bank 4775121
Highway Police 5343402
Traffic Police 4896390
Public Security Dept. 4630321
Hotel Complaints 5605800
Price Complaints 5661176
Water & Sewage Complaints 4897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 478711
1
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 4623101

Abdali Tel. Repairs 5661101
Jordan Television 4773111
Radio Jordan 4774111
Water Authority 5680100
J. Electricity Authority 5815615
Electric Power Co. 4636381
RJ Flight Information 44-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 44-53200
HOSPITALS
AMMAN:
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 5921199
The Islamic, Abdli 5666131/7
Hussein Medical Centre Tel. 5 858586
Luzmila 4630195
Khalidi Maternity 4644281/6
Akileh Maternity 4642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362
Malhas, J. Amman 4636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 5607071
Shmeisani Hospital 5669131
University Hospital 5353444
Al-Munsher Hospital 5667227/9
Al-Ahli, Abdali 5664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 477101/3
Al-Bastir 4775111/26
Army, Marka 4891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 4602240/50
Amal Hospital 5674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital 1640 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)900560
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990

IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111
FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
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ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
08:30 Jeddah (RJ)
08:45 Lamaca (RJ)
09:00 Bombay (RJ)
09:05 Dhabran, Riyadh (RJ)
09:20 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
16:05 Brussels (RJ)
16:40 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:50 London (RJ)
18:10 Athens (RJ)
18:20 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
18:20 Paris (RJ)

05:30 Agaba, Paris (RJ)
05:30 Lamaca (RJ)
08:15 Frankfurt, Berlin (RJ)
11:15 Vienna (RJ)
11:15 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
11:30 Rome (RJ)
12:20 Athens (RJ)
12:25 London (RJ)
14:40 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
20:00 New Delhi (RJ)
20:25 Jeddah (RJ)
20:40 Damascus (RJ)
21:10 Cairo (RJ)
21:30 Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok (RJ)
22:00 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
22:45 Sanaa (RJ)
23:30 Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)
Other Flights
06:30 Paris (AF)
06:35 Damascus, London (BA)
08:55 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (EK)
11:30 Al Hudaidah (Y)
11:45 Kuwait (KU)
13:00 Jeddah (SV)
13:10 Moscow (SU)
13:25 Doha (GF)
15:30 Doha (QR)
19:00 Beirut (ME)
19:45 Tel Aviv (LY)
21:00 Cairo (MS)
01:15 Beirut, Amsterdam (KL)
02:40 Belgrade (OK)
02:45 Beirut, Athens (OA)
03:00 Rome (AZ)
Royal Wings (RW)
07:00 Agaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
07:45 Tel Aviv (from QAIA) (RW)
08:30 Agaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
20:30 Agaba (from QAIA) (RW)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
05:00 Madrid (RJ)

Turkey seeks Security Council membership

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey will seek to become a member of the United Nations Security Council in 2001, some council members are scheduled to be replaced by others, a Turkish diplomat was quoted as saying Saturday.

"We will enter election for Security Council membership in 2001," Turkey's ambassador at the UN, Volkan Vural, told Turkish newspapers.

Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz and Foreign Minister Ismail Cem will represent Turkey in next week's United Nations General Assembly session, he said.

Vural said their talks would include lobbying for Security Council membership.

Third suspect in professor's murder arrested

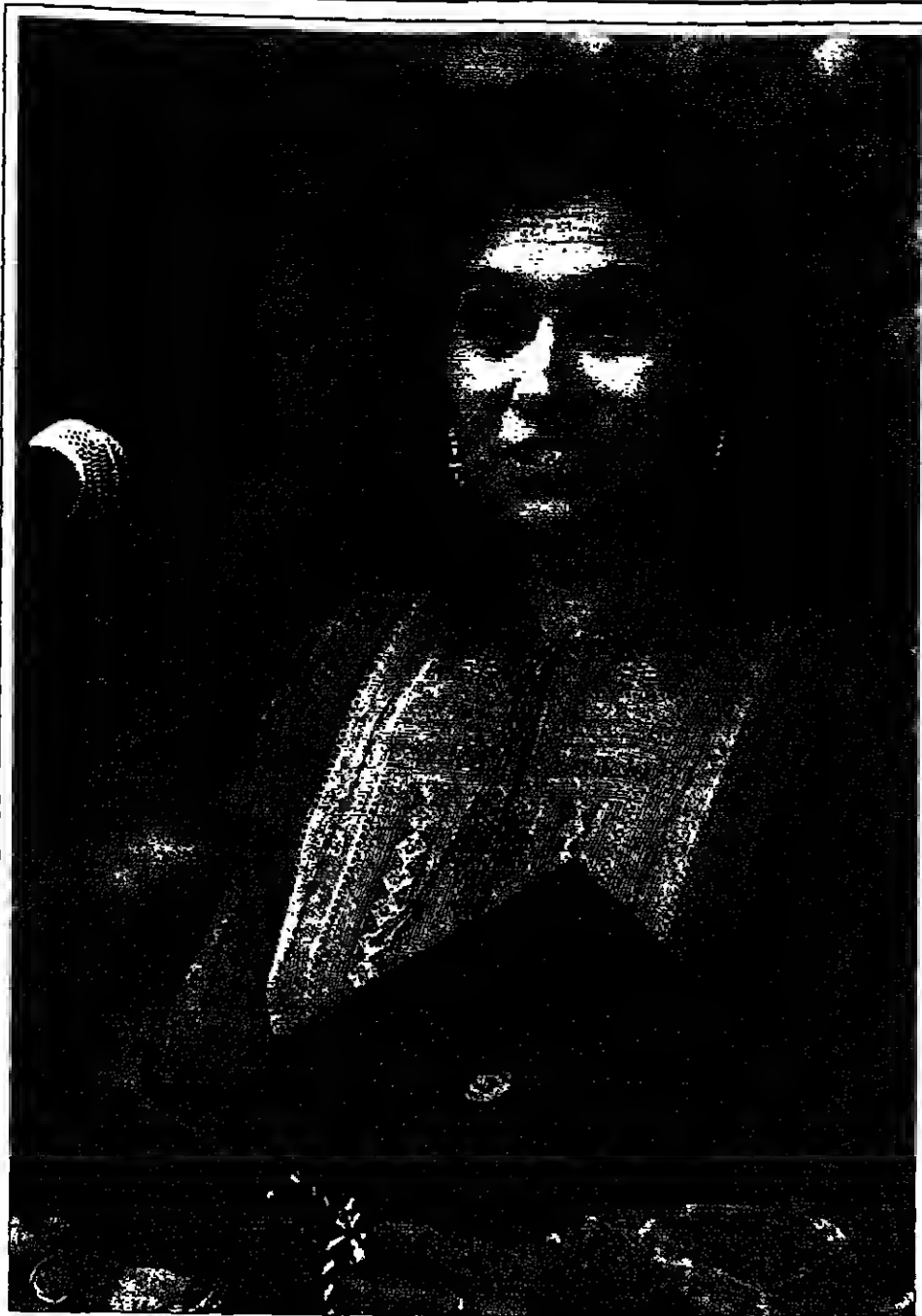
By a Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Police on Saturday said they arrested a third suspect in connection with the recent murder of a university professor in Madaba.

"We will enter election for Security Council membership in 2001," Turkey's ambassador at the UN, Volkan Vural, told Turkish newspapers.

Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz and Foreign Minister Ismail Cem will represent Turkey in next week's United Nations General Assembly session, he said.

Vural said their talks would include lobbying for Security Council membership.



PRINCESS SARVATH ADDRESSES MEETING: Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath addresses a meeting Saturday of the London-based Voluntary Service Overseas on the occasion of its 40th anniversary. In her address, Princess Sarvath, who is a member of the VSO council, stressed the importance of keeping open the opportunities for contact between people of different traditions, cultures and religions. The VSO sends volunteers to various countries to share and develop their skills and understanding and to share their experience with others (Reuters photo)

Unemployment conference opens today

Officials, economists voice doubts over symposium's benefits

By Mohammad Ben Hussein

AMMAN — A much-trumpeted national conference seeking solutions to rising unemployment opens in Amman today, but officials and economists appear divided on whether the parity has the clout to help curb the painful situation that is threatening social stability.

The conference, organised by the Ministry of Administrative Development, is expected to develop short-, medium- and long-term employment strategies to tackle joblessness, officially estimated at 15 per cent and independently at up to 27 per cent.

"We welcome efforts to convene the conference," said former Labour Minister Abdul Karim Dughni. "But we do not believe that this conference will come out with realistic solutions because the problem has deep-rooted social, economic and educational aspects," Dughni told the Jordan Times.

He was referring to economic recession, budget restrictions, the apparent failure of the educational system to link school curricula with the market's labour needs and social taboos that have prohibited many Jordanians from taking what they consider menial jobs.

Banners calling on school students not to look to public sector posts after they graduate from university and stressing that Jordanians are partners in trying to solve unemployment have sprung up in the streets of the capital ahead of the three-day conference, originally set for August.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, who for years has been calling for cooperation among all sectors to find creative solutions for the unemployment problem, is expected to inaugurate the conference.

The idea of the conference was initiated by Minister of Administrative Development Bassam Emoush, an independent Islamist leader, earlier this year during a Cabinet meeting. The idea was endorsed by His Majesty King Hussein.

But several economists, businesspersons and even some officials have said privately because of the function of the ministries of Labour and Planning. Emoush's ministry has no major role to play in trying to solve the unemployment issue.

Some have even advised Emoush not to go ahead with the conference because any failure will be blamed on his ministry.

"The fact that we managed to bring all concerned private- and public-sector representatives to the conference is an achievement in itself," Emoush recently told a group of sceptical journalists. "Even if the conference fails, it is enough that we were able to draw people's attention to the seriousness of the problem."

The conference is being held amid rising demands by the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions to crack down on the more than 350,000 foreign workers, many operating illegally in the country, and to set minimum wages to lure local labourers.

Economists and businesspersons say past governments have lacked the political will to curb the number of illegal workers — Egyptians, Iraqis and Syrians — working mainly in low-paid agriculture and construction jobs that are shunned by many Jordanians in the absence of a minimum wage policy and other benefits such as health and social security insurance.

"The only solution to fighting illegal foreign labourers is enforcing tighter border controls," Emoush said.

Most Arab nationals can spend up to six months in Jordan without having to obtain residence permits, a loophole that has enabled many to overstay.

Occasional pardons issued by past governments to exempt illegal workers from paying overdue fees has further complicated matters.

Water Ministry signs JD6.4m deals for infrastructure improvements

By Ahmad Khatib

AMMAN — A consortium of international and local companies Saturday signed four agreements worth JD6.4 million with the Ministry of Water and Irrigation to supervise and provide architectural services in the implementation of the "Integrated Project to Develop the Northern Ghor Area."

The JD180 million project will include constructing dams in the Mujeb, Waleh and Hasa valleys, a diversion dam at the confluence of Mujeb and Waleh, and infrastructure for an irrigation system to water 12,000

dunums of land situated at the northern part of Ghor Safi.

The project aims at exploiting floods flowing to the targeted valleys to provide 19 million cubic metres of water per year to the Arab Potash Company and the Dead Sea Chemical Complex, 15 mcm per year to the tourist area at the eastern part of the Dead Sea and 20 mcm per year to increase irrigation and agriculture for 61 dunums in the northern Ghor.

Jordan Valley Authority Secretary General Dureid Mahasneh said the project is very important to Jordan and thus "full cooperation

between all parties involved is essential for the success of the project."

He stressed that environment, sustainable development and water issues must be integrated.

"Around JD15 million will be available to ensure environment protection in the Jordan Valley," he said. "Environment is important, but we must not forget our water needs."

According to the ministry, the storage capacity of the Waleh Dam will be 9.3 mcm, with the possibility of increasing it to 26 mcm in the future. The storage capacity of the Mujeb Dam

will be 35 mcm, while the capacity of the Tannor Dam, in the Hasa Valley, will be 16.8 mcm.

The project is expected to return JD40 million per year in profit and provide 500-800 jobs.

Thirty per cent of the project's cost will be covered by the government, while the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development will pay 56 per cent and the Islamic Fund for Development will guarantee 14 per cent, according to the ministry.

The project is expected to be completed and start operating within the next three years.

Zai plant now pumping at full capacity — official

By Ahmad Khatib

AMMAN — The government Saturday affirmed that the Zai Water Treatment Plant has resumed full-capacity pumping and now provides supplies to Western Amman twice a week.

Speaking to the press yesterday, Jordan Valley Authority Secretary General Dureid Mahasneh, who recently met with the Lower House Committee on Water and Agriculture, said he wanted to assure citizens that the state of the capital's water supplies is stable and that the water is potable.

"Everything is under control, and the situation is

much better than it was in early July," Mahasneh told the Jordan Times. "At least the water provided by the Zai plant is now free of nematodes and faecal coliforms."

He added that the recommendation by the ministers of water and health to boil water before drinking was for "precautionary reasons and not because there is something to be afraid of."

Last week, Minister of Water and Irrigation Hani Mulki said that before conducting chemical purification on water coming to the Zai plant, various kinds of fish were being released in the waterways leading to the plant to provide a natural method to clean the

water. Mulki explained that the fish would consume algae and other suspended particles, thus providing a natural method to clean the water.

But the committee's head, Salameh Hani, and Raja Jedon, a water expert and former assistant to the Water Authority secretary general, criticised the method, saying that fish might pollute the water with their refuse or if they die. They stressed that fish are used as indicators for pollution and not as treatment.

The Zai plant normally supplies around 40 per cent of Amman's water needs, pumping 120,000 cubic metres of water per hour.

Tarawneh pledges close partnership with Parliament

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh on Saturday pledged that his Cabinet will work closely with Parliament to implement His Majesty King Hussein's directives as outlined in the letter of designation to the new government.

Addressing the Senate's first meeting of the 13th Parliament's second extraordinary session, Tarawneh pledged that the Royal letter of designation will serve as a guideline for the new government's programmes.

The prime minister expressed hope that the new government, which presented its policy statement to the Lower House on Thursday, would receive a vote of confidence, so that it can work toward fulfilling the aspirations of the Jordanian people.

In the policy statement to the Lower House, Tarawneh focused on the economic challenges facing the Kingdom, pledging to continue economic reforms and combat soaring unemployment and poverty.

Tarawneh also pledged to continue strengthening economic ties with other Arab states, in particular the Palestinians, and reasserted his government's commitment to the proposed Arab common market.

At the outset of Saturday's meeting, the Royal Decree convening the session was read out, followed by another Royal Decree accepting the resignations of several senators. These were Jawad Anani, who was made chief of the Royal Court, Taher Kanaan, minister of state for development affairs, Jawdat Shoul, minister of justice, Tawfiq Kreishan, minister of municipal and rural affairs, and Nayef Qadi, minister of interior.

Another Royal Decree appointed Ahmad Obeidat, Taher Masi, Marwan Dudin, Ibrahim Ghababeh and Khalid Fanaseh as senators effective Sept. 16, 1998.

The new senators were sworn in with the exception of Obeidat, who is abroad.

Court frees two convicted of complicity in 1997 murder

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — Two cousins convicted in May of complicity in a 1997 murder and sentenced to 10 years in prison walked out of the Criminal Court on Saturday as free men.

Faisal and Mohammad Kharabsheh, both 20, were found guilty of complicity in the killing of Ibrahim Mohammad in their house on May 9, 1997, in the Rmeimn area of Salt.

Also sentenced was Ghazi Ali, 20, who received 15 years for manslaughter.

In July 1997, the Court of Cassation returned the case to the Criminal Court requesting a retrial, "because the Criminal Court based its rulings only on the prosecution's witnesses and failed to consider other witnesses' testimonies."

According to the prosecution charge sheet, the three defendants were listening to loud music in their house. Disturbed by the noise, their neighbour, Mohammad, went to ask the youths to turn down the music. An argument ensued, and "Ali drew a switchblade and stabbed

Mohammad in the chest killing him instantly," the court said.

On Saturday, the Criminal Court, headed by Judge Jibad Khasawneh and including Judges Yassin Abdullah and Abdullah Oweis, found Faisal and Mohammad Kharabsheh innocent.

"After hearing some witnesses for the second time, it was proven that the two defendants were trying to stop the fighting," the court said Saturday.

The conviction against Ghazi Ali, however, was upheld.

Trade panel agrees on products

(Continued from page 1)

the organisation of trade fairs, joint seminars and workshops.

Jordan and the PNA also agreed to abide by the quality specifications and standards set by the Royal Scientific Society concerning all products exchanged between them in an attempt to encourage joint investments.

According to the memorandum, both sides also agreed to transport Jordanian cement to the Palestinian territories across the Prince Mohammad Bridge.

Jordan currently exports cement to the Palestinian territories via King Hussein Bridge.

In the agricultural field the joint committee agreed, to add fresh fruits and vegetables, already included in the agricultural protocol, to the list of products exchanged between Jordan and the PNA.

The committee also reviewed regional and international developments in the peace process and decided on continued coordination on all fronts to attain the objectives of the process.

"Sometimes we suffer the same frustrations suffered by the Palestinians [regarding the stalemate in the peace process], but we try not to let this frustration affect us," Tarawneh said.

"We should utilise the Jordanian-Israeli peace agreement to remove all impediments hindering the Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation," Tarawneh said.

Arabs draft resolution demanding probe

(Continued from page 1)

intelligence showed the plant produced chemical weapons. U.S. officials have cited a soil sample taken from the grounds of the complex which they say contained EMPTA, a precursor chemical for the deadly nerve agent VX.

Washington defended its decision to attack the plant Friday following a call by former President Jimmy Carter to investigate whether the plant really had a terrorism connection.

"If the evidence shows that the Sudanese are guilty, they should be condemned for lying and for contributing to terrorist activities," Carter said Thursday. "Otherwise, we should admit our error and make amends to those who have suffered loss or injury." Since the Aug. 20 attack, U.S. officials have been briefing Security Council members about the evidence it had to justify the bombing.

"We want to put the United States in an embarrassing situation," Erwa said. "We are just asking for a fact-finding mission, no politics."

and territory, and a violation of international law." Erwa said he and other Arab ambassadors also felt emboldened to push for the resolution following the recent Non-Aligned Movement Summit, where 53 heads of government expressed their "deep concern" about the attack and called on Washington to pay Sudan for damages.

The United States has said a U.N. investigation was unnecessary because U.S.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

- * "L'Histoire Adèle F" at the French Cultural Centre on Monday Sept. 21 at 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.

LECTURE

- * "The Legend, the Mind and the History" (in Arabic) by Ms. Hayat Atieh and Mr. Mowaffaq Mahadeen at the Friends of Archaeology Centre (Tel. 5930682) on Monday Sept. 21 at 7:00 p.m. (The lecture will tackle the female goddess issue and draw a comparison between the local line of thinking and the Hindu European lines).

PUPPET SHOW

- * Children's puppet show "Said wal Bolbol" (Said and the Bird) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 6:30 p.m.

DARAT AL FUNUN SUMMER 98 FESTIVAL

- * Summer 98 cultural activities at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, last until Sept. 30, include:

EXHIBITIONS

- * 50 years of graphic art from Lebanon and works by Jordanian artist Sahel Hani at the Main House.
- * Works by Iraqi artist Samer Usama and by Jordanian artist Said Haddadin at the Blue House.
- * Installation works by Jordanian artist Samia Zaru at the Byzantine Church.
- * Exhibition of photographs "Memory of a Place" by Jordanian artist Hussein Da'esh at the Museum.
- * Display of Bani Hamida and Jordan River Designs products (rugs, cushions, wall-hangings, and quilts) at the Jordan River Designs showroom, until Sept. 30 (Tel. 4613081).
- * Photography exhibition entitled "Les Cies d'Artistes a Paris" at the premises of the Association of the Jordanian Plastic Artists, Jabal Weibdeh, until Sept. 30.
- * Paintings by Iraqi artists Ismail Sheikhly, Suzanne Sheikhly, and Khalid Qasab entitled "Pioneers of the Fringes" at Orfali Art Gallery, Umm Utheima, until Sept. 21 (Tel. 5526932).
- * Paintings by Rula Shukairy at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Amman, until Sept. 30.

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Primakov under pressure to produce results

MOSCOW (R) — Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov faced pressure Saturday to accelerate efforts to tackle Russia's deep economic crisis and help ordinary people through their toughest times in years.

Primakov outlined his economic plans to reporters Friday and Russia Television channel broadcast his remarks in full for the first time Saturday, showing him reassuring Russians that the government would start paying more attention to their needs.

He and President Boris Yeltsin discussed the economic turmoil with Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma and they agreed to create an anti-crisis group to tackle the problems together.

But Russian media turned the heat on Primakov for failing to complete the formation of his government more than a week after he took office and the opposition Communist Party gave his economic plans only a cautious welcome.

"They were only the blueprints of his as yet unpublished programme. They require careful analysis," Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov told reporters.

"There were some reassuring noises aimed at support of domestic industry, at paying off debts, at compensation for people, a more socially-oriented course. We will see how it works in reality."

The Communists later met to consider their strate-

gy before a day of nationwide protests planned for Oct. 7 over huge wage arrears which piled up under previous governments.

The Communists played an important role in Primakov's appointment by putting up stern resistance to Yeltsin's first choice of prime minister, loyal ally Viktor Chernomyrdin, and persuading the weakened president to make a compromise.

But they have refused to enter Primakov's government en masse, as have several other parties, making it hard to put together a cabinet. Many posts remain vacant, including the finance ministry.

Primakov, 68, gave a glimpse of his economic strategy in the statement which he read to reporters Friday but continued to send conflicting signals.

He said he was committed to reforms, although "corrections" were needed to the previous government's programme and the central bank has alarmed foreign investors by saying it is ready to print money to pay off state debts and refloat banks.

Primakov pledged to regulate Russia's foreign exchange market to try to halt the rouble's slide, announced plans to impose state monopolies on the alcohol and tobacco trade and vowed to fulfil Russia's debt obligations.

He added: "We must create a financial basis for guaranteeing the payment of wages to workers in the

budget (state) sector and pensioners. We cannot solve this problem immediately but I think we will feel the results soon."

Kuchma is also hoping for quick results to ensure Russia's problems do not drag down Ukraine's economy. He met Primakov after two days of talks with Yeltsin at which the presidents agreed to set up a crisis group to tackle their problems.

They gave no details, but said their countries were still committed to a strong partnership and economic reforms, despite their economic problems.

Russian newspapers are growing increasingly impatient.

Komsomolskaya Pravda said each new delay in forming the government was a blow to Russians hoping for quick measures to protect their savings, held in struggling banks. The Kommersant Daily business newspaper agreed.

"A week has passed and catastrophically little has been done. The cabinet has not been formed. The only achievement is a five-minute address by the prime minister (Friday) which broke the information blockade," Kommersant said.

Other newspapers have expressed alarm at the limited access to Primakov, a former spy master, and the government since he took office. He promised Friday to make regular television appearances but he has his work cut out to impress the media.



Polish Foreign Minister and head of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe Bronislaw Geremek (left) is accompanied by Albanian Foreign Minister Paskal Milo at Tirana airport after his arrival in the troubled country for meetings with Prime Minister Fatos Nann and former President Sali Berisha (AFP photo)

Albanian opposition rallies as OSCE delegates meet leaders

TIRANA (R) — Supporters of Albania's former President Sali Berisha marched through the capital's main square Saturday as a European delegation began talks with leaders to try to end political turmoil in the country.

About 3,000 supporters of Berisha's main opposition Democratic Party moved peacefully around Skanderbeg Square chanting and waving posters demanding the resignation of Socialist Prime Minister Fatos Nano.

The rally, the fifth consecutive protest in a week, soon ended without incident, witnesses said. Except for a few policemen directing traffic, there was no armed police presence.

Berisha, who again called for Nano's resignation at a news conference, did not participate in the demonstration. Instead he left to meet a European del-

egation which arrived in the capital earlier Saturday.

The delegation, represented by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe, is headed by Polish Foreign Minister Bronislaw Geremek.

Violence erupted last Sunday and Monday when Berisha supporters took to the streets and stormed government buildings after the slaying of senior Democratic Party member Rexhep Meidani and would meet Nano after talking with Berisha.

The government accused Berisha of attempting a coup and Friday parliament lifted his immunity against prosecution, effectively opening the way for his arrest. But state prosecutors said they still needed to investigate the matter.

The OSCE has tried to mediate peace between Albania's rival political factions since

violence erupted in the Balkan state last year after the collapse of fraudulent investment schemes wiped out the life savings of most Albanians.

The international community, through the OSCE, has cautioned the government not to act too hastily to arrest Berisha for fear of setting off more violence.

An OSCE official in Tirana said the delegation had already met Albanian President Rexhep Meidani and would meet Nano after talking with Berisha.

Berisha told reporters earlier he would ask Geremek and his delegation to condemn Nano's government and said his daily protests would continue next week to force Nano to resign.

Berisha also said he and his supporters would visit the grave of Hajdari Sunday outside Tirana.

NEWS IN BRIEF

North Irish fury over payouts to jailed IRA guerrillas

BELFAST (R) — Pro-British politicians in Northern Ireland reacted with fury Saturday to news of compensation payments made to jailed IRA guerrillas after an attempt to tunnel out of prison last year. About 250 Irish Republican Army prisoners were paid a total of £76,000 (\$127,700) for personal property that was lost, damaged or confiscated during security searches at the top-security Maze jail after the tunnel was discovered there. The payouts were for missing watches, sports shoes and other valuables. One prisoner received £3,000 under the scheme, which is funded by the British government. News of the payments came only days after a Protestant woman was refused compensation under the same scheme for the death of her mother and father in the IRA bombing of a fish shop in Belfast's Shankill Road Protestant stronghold in 1993. "It is a scandal when prisoners convicted of horrendous terrorist crimes can get more for the loss of their pyjamas and slippers than a woman can for the murders of her mother and father," said Peter Robinson, deputy leader of the fierce Protestant Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). A British government spokesman said there was no connection between the two cases. The IRA has been observing a ceasefire since July last year after a 30-year guerrilla campaign against British rule of Northern Ireland. Its political wing Sinn Fein declared last month that the war was "over, done with and gone".

Millions marooned by Bangladesh floods

RAJSHAHI, Bangladesh (R) — As floodwaters recede and international aid starts to pour into Bangladesh, millions of people are still marooned. In the village of Godagari in the northwestern district of Rajshahi road communication has been cut off by water from the rising river Padma which engulfed the area over two weeks ago, inundating thousands of homes. This has hindered relief activity and movement away from the villages to flood shelters. While Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and government agencies say they are doing their utmost to get to the marooned people, the people clinging to their wrecked homes allege they are being left to fend for themselves. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said her government would ensure no one died of starvation or neglect and has warned of severe punishment for looters. Local officials said the sick and the weak would suffer most in the aftermath of the flood. The floods, the worst in Bangladesh's history, have killed nearly 1,100 people, left some 25 million homeless or marooned, and have caused huge damage to crops, industry and infrastructure. Flood monitors said Saturday the waters had been receding steadily and all the submerged areas could be dry again in the next couple of weeks.

China detains dissident linked to opposition party

HONG KONG (R) — Chinese police Saturday detained an activist who earlier tried to register an opposition party to challenge Communist rule, a Hong Kong-based human rights group said. Liu Lianjun, a member of the Chinese Democratic Party, was taken away by 10 public security officials at the home of a friend in Qingdao, Shandong province, said the Information Centre of Human Rights and Democratic Movement in China. Liu, 29, applied on Sept. 10 with authorities in Shandong to register the party and was told that the government was considering his request. His whereabouts were now unknown. His detention comes just four days after U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson ended a landmark visit to China. At least two other activists — Ren Wanding and Yao Zhenxian — are known to have been detained after Robinson's departure. Ren, who is also linked to the opposition grouping, was detained Thursday. But he was released hours later after officials warned him against forming the opposition party.

China woman hires assassins to kill ex-boyfriend

BEIJING (R) — A Chinese court has imposed the death sentence on a businesswoman and two assassins she hired to kill her former boyfriend and three members of his family, the Beijing Youth Daily said Saturday. Li Jiangping, 29, former manager of an audio-visual shop, said she would appeal against the death sentence meted out by the Beijing Number One Intermediate People's Court Thursday, the newspaper said. She offered to pay the assassins 80,000 yuan (\$9,600) to kill her former boyfriend, Pang Zhonghui, because she was worried he would stop her wedding to another man on Oct. 1, it said. The other man was only identified by his surname, Guo. Pang had demanded 60,000 yuan from Li when they broke up in 1997, the daily said, adding that he frequently beat her during the eight years that they lived together. Pang, his 61-year-old father, 57-year-old mother and 12-year-old niece were stabbed to death at their Beijing home on March 18, it said. One of the assassins, Chen Haisong, was an employee of the businesswoman. The other assassin, Xi Yantao, was from the same province as Chen. The court sentenced a fourth defendant, Chen Liming, to 10 years in prison for providing the assassins with knives, the newspaper said. A fifth defendant, Yu Tao, was jailed for two years for harbouring fugitives, it said, adding that the sentence was relatively lenient because he was underage and cooperated with investigations.

36 orangutans set free in East Kalimantan

JAKARTA (AFP) — Indonesian conservationists Saturday freed 36 orangutans, some of them victims of last year's raging forest fires, into a protected forest area in East Kalimantan (Borneo), wildlife officials said. The 36 orangutans had been under the care of Wanariset forest research centre, which is still taking care of 151 other orphaned, injured or homeless gentle apes and preparing them to return to the wild. "Seventeen male and 19 female orangutans are being taken to Meratus protected forest, five hours away from here," Wanariset veterinarian Amir Ma'arif told AFP by telephone from Wanariset, 38 kilometres from the city of Balikpapan. Ma'arif said the average age of the 36 orangutans was four years old. "Those released were previously villagers' pets, orphaned or injured and those that lost their homes in the fires," Ma'arif said. He added Wanariset staff would monitor the freed apes carefully for two weeks after their release to ensure they could adapt to living outside the protection of the research centre, where they had been fed and doctored. Accompanied by 25 Wanariset staff members and more than 50 volunteers, the 36 orangutans will join more than 100 orangutans already in the 15,000 hectares Meratus protected forest. An unknown number of orangutans (the name means jungle people in Malay) lost their lives in the forest fires that devastated large areas of Kalimantan last year.

Australia's Hanson threat fading ahead of poll

SYDNEY (R) — Australian right-wing MP Pauline Hanson appears increasingly unlikely to bode much political power after the Oct. 3 national election with a Saturday opinion poll showing another fall in her popularity.

Saturday, Hanson also faced new controversy over her call for Australia's church leaders to keep out of politics after four major churches called for an end to attacks on the country's primary Aboriginal body.

A survey done in the conservative heartland of Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia states showed Hanson's One Nation party was unlikely to win seats in the lower house of parliament, the House of Representatives, outside Queensland.

Prior to the poll campaign, which started on Aug. 30, the party was expected to win lower house seats in all three states.

Now Hanson even faces a tough struggle to win her own seat in her home state of Queensland, where the anti-immigration and protectionist One Nation party won nearly a quarter of the vote in the June 13 state election.

The Queensland election prompted fears that One Nation support was so strong the party could hold the balance of power in the

upper house senate after the national poll.

"As the campaign has progressed, voters have moved back to the major parties," the Weekend Australian newspaper's poll said.

The poll showed One Nation had support of about 29 per cent in key marginal seats in Queensland state, and about 14 per cent in key marginal seats in New South Wales and Western Australia.

But while it was unlikely to win a seat in its own right, One Nation preference votes could play a key role in determining the outcome in several marginal seats.

Australia's complicated electoral system requires voters to number candidates in order of choice. As the votes are counted, the least preferred candidates are eliminated.

Their preference or secondary votes are distributed to the other parties, occasionally allowing an outside candidate to leapfrog the favourites to win the seat.

Most of One Nation's support, which reached a record 13 per cent high nationwide in July before falling back to about eight per cent now, had come from disgruntled Liberal-National coalition government voters.

But several opinion polls have recently shown a slide

in One Nation's popularity. Hanson, who became notorious in September 1996 when she said Australia was in danger of being swamped by Asians, Saturday blasted the churches for becoming involved in politics.

The United, Catholic, Anglican and Baptist churches had earlier defended the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSI) in a letter to newspapers, saying negative comments were counter-productive.

The letter followed ongoing government criticism of ATSI's operations. Aboriginal groups said last week they were concerned the conservative government planned to abolish ATSI after the Oct. 3 national election to win voters from One Nation.

"If they (church leaders) want to get into politics, by all means, put themselves up for election," Hanson told reporters.

The Reuters Poll Trend, a smoothed average of the three major opinion polls, shows the Labour opposition currently has a two-point primary vote lead over the government.

Labour needs to win an extra 27 seats in the 148-seat lower house to win government. The conservative coalition ended 13 years of Labour rule with a landslide win in March 1996.

Kosovo Albanians outline their peace plans

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AFP) — The Serbian authorities and ethnic Albanians in the violence-wrecked province of Kosovo are trying to set the stage for meaningful peace talks, but they appear to remain far apart.

Negotiators for Kosovo's ethnic Albanian majority say they have put forward proposals for the future of the violence-wrecked Serbian province, demanding it be granted the same republic status as Serbia and Montenegro, the two component parts of the Yugoslav republic.

Kosovo Albanian official Ijaz Kurtisi told AFP that the Albanian proposal was presented before the U.S. mediator Christopher Hill made his proposal published Thursday in a local Albanian-language daily.

Earlier this month under U.S. pressure the Serbian authorities in Belgrade and the Kosovo Albanian leader Ibrahim Rugova said they would agree on an interim accord to "normalise" the situation in Kosovo. This would be reviewed after three years.

Under the Albanian proposal, Kosovo would be granted the status of a republic, during a transitional period of three years maximum. Kurtisi, one of the members of Rugova's negotiating team, said, Belgrade officials have always opposed the possibility

of Kosovo becoming the third republic within Yugoslavia.

Its officials have offered no concrete proposal, but it was expected that Belgrade's position would be much clearer after the Serbian parliament meets on Sept. 28.

The 16-point Albanian plan, said that during the transitional period, Kosovo "will function within Yugoslavia as an associate entity," with interior autonomy, Albanian sources said.

Kosovo would have its own president, parliament, government and judicial system, with a constitutional court, the proposal said.

Issues of defence, foreign and monetary policy and customs would remain under the authority of Yugoslavia.

The province would deploy its own police forces, formed and organised with the assistance of the international community, it said.

Under the U.S. proposal, Belgrade police would be responsible only for international criminal investigations, bordering police and state security forces should reduce their presence as a confidence-building measure.

However, it remained to be seen if Belgrade would accept this measure, since its security forces have strongly backed Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic's iron rule in the province.

Kosovo was stripped of its

autonomous status by Milosevic, then president of Serbia, in 1989, and its 1.8 million ethnic Albanian majority population has been demanding independence ever since.

More than 900 people have been killed and around 300,000 driven from their homes in seven months of fighting between Belgrade's troops and ethnic Albanian rebels of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA).

The Albanians see a ceasefire and the withdrawal of Serbian security forces as essential before an interim peace agreement could be signed.

All those who participated in the Kosovo clashes should be amnestied, except for those who were found guilty of committing war crimes, the proposal said.

While the U.S. proposal called for elections in Kosovo after several months, the Albanian proposal said they should be held three months after the signing of the agreement.

The interim accord would define the procedure which would enable the reaching of a final agreement for Kosovo, and would not last more than three years, the Albanian plan said.

If there was no final agreement during that period, a referendum would be organised in Kosovo.

Shooting reverberates through Monrovia

ABIDJAN (AFP) — Small arms and heavy machinegun fire reverberated in the Liberian capital Monrovia during the night around the stronghold of ethnic Krahn clan opposed to President Charles Taylor, residents told AFP Saturday.

The fire continued early Saturday in the sector in Camp Johnson Road, about a kilometre from the Mamba Point diplomatic enclave, said the residents. There was no immediate information on any casualties.

"Traffic was immediately affected, with a lot of people seeking refuge in Mamba Point Friday night," said a resident.

Residents of the Monrovia suburbs said routes to the city centre were blocked Saturday.

With phone lines already damaged by heavy rains, reaching the city centre by telephone Saturday was close to impossible.

The streets are not safe," said a source contacted by AFP. "Traffic is very heavy and there are

rumours people are looting."

Two radio stations — Radio Dacor and Radio Monrovia — had stopped broadcasting in Monrovia, the independent Star radio said.

Star radio also reported that Joe Mulbah, the minister of information, had called for calm during an earlier broadcast and confirmed that Liberian security forces would conduct an investigation into the latest clashes.

"The situation is under control," Mulbah told the

radio.

The radio, however, said surely this was not the case.

For the past month, residents of the Camp Johnson Road have been living in constant fear of unbridled crime and lawlessness blamed on the Krahn clan supporters of former warlord Roosevelt Johnson.

Johnson — who has no connection to the street of the same name — has remained a thorn in the side of former adversary and now president Charles

Taylor, two years after a peace accord ended Liberia's civil war.

The onetime warlord headed ethnic Krahn fighters who battled Taylor during the brutal tribal and political war from 1989 to 1996 that devastated this West African country.

Militias were dissolved last year and disarmed with help from the ECO-MOG African peacekeeping force, in Liberia since 1990, but many displaced Krahn have settled along Camp Johnson road.

The ceasefire has hardly stopped the violence. In April 1996 a government attempt to arrest Johnson resulted in seven weeks of intense clashes between fighters loyal to each side.

Since his election as president in 1997, Taylor has accused Johnson of plotting to assassinate him, while Johnson claims it is the government that is trying to kill him.

In order to rid himself of Johnson, Taylor named him ambassador to India, a post Johnson never accepted.

BRIEF

Over payouts
A guerrillas

politicians in Northern Ireland news of compensation for 250 Irish Republican Army (IRA) members who were injured or killed during the Troubles. The IRA has paid out more than £100 million in compensation to its members and their families. The IRA has also paid out more than £100 million in compensation to the families of its victims. The IRA has also paid out more than £100 million in compensation to the families of its victims.

Narrowed
Floods

As floodwaters recede in the village of Chidagari in the Bahi road community in the rising river Padma, the floodwaters have killed nearly 100 people and injured many others. The floodwaters have also destroyed many homes and businesses. The floodwaters have also destroyed many homes and businesses.

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hires assassins
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court has imposed the death and two assassins. The man was sentenced to death for the murder of a woman. The man was sentenced to death for the murder of a woman. The man was sentenced to death for the murder of a woman.

ans set free
alimantan

Asian conservationists Sunday of them victims of last year's forest fire in East Kalimantan. The fire killed 151 people and destroyed 1,500 hectares of forest. The fire killed 151 people and destroyed 1,500 hectares of forest.



Philippine marines rush through the surf at Ternate Town, Cavite province, carrying a survivor of the ill-fated Philippine ferry 'Princess of the Orient' which sank outside of Manila Bay (AFP photo)

Death toll rises, search continues after Philippine ferry sinking

MANILA (AFP) — Nearly 130 people were still missing Saturday night and 13 were confirmed dead, 24 hours after a Philippine ferry sank near the mouth of Manila Bay amid scenes of panic in howling winds and crashing waves.

Authorities said 313 people had been rescued and they were continuing their search for survivors.

Ed Go, vice-president of Sulpicio Lines which owns the ill-fated 'Princess of the Orient', said 13 bodies had been recovered while 127 people were still missing. The boat carried 453 people.

Go corrected an earlier report that 314 survivors were rescued.

Three navy ships and a coast guard vessel were continuing the search after nightfall, naval spokesman Lieutenant Commander Salvador Cuba said. An aerial search was called off.

Two ferries and a tugboat sent by Sulpicio to join the search were withdrawn because they were too large to manoeuvre in the shallow waters, Go said.

Battling strong winds and heavy rains spawned by a

tropical storm, navy and coast guard ships and fishing boats hauled scores of people out of the water, with others being plucked from the sea by helicopter.

Some managed to swim ashore. Go said they were still hoping that other survivors may have made it to land but not yet contacted authorities.

Stunned survivors, soaked with oil or cut and bruised, told a harrowing story of how the ferry, bound for the central island of Cebu, was buffeted by large waves late Friday.

It began listing, sending furniture and baggage crashing into passengers.

At first crew members called for calm and helped passengers don life vests. But panic set in when the ferry began to turn over and the lights went out, they said.

Benjamin Ministerio, 26, an ex-convict returning to Cebu after serving his sentence, said he saw his uncle Bonifacio Palermo — another former prisoner — buried among metal cots as the ferry listed.

"I went to the upper deck and was ready to jump but I

was swept by a strong wave under a stairway," he said. Ministerio went down with the ship but managed to swim upwards and grab a floating life jacket.

He then saw a rubber boat and swam towards it.

Amelio Olivida, 31, a seaman who was a passenger on the ferry, said he asked a crew member in his lifeboat why there had been no order to abandon ship. The crewman said the captain seemed shocked by the accident.

Survivors said they believed many people had been trapped inside the ship as it turned over. Some said they saw crew members jump off first.

Go said the crew had sent a distress call and given the order to abandon ship after it developed a 20 degree list.

The ferry was one more victim of Tropical Storm Vicki, which crossed the Luzon Sea and hit the country with sustained wind speeds of 100 kilometres an hour overnight, the Manila weather bureau said.

President Joseph Estrada Saturday declared a state of calamity in two northern

provinces. Disaster officials said nine people were killed by landslides or fallen power lines or had drowned. They said more than 300,000 people were affected by widespread flooding.

Go said there were no foreign names in the manifest. But Ronnie Ambray, 23, an apprentice crewman, said he saw a Caucasian English-speaking couple with a baby.

The sinking was the latest ferry disaster in this archipelago which relies largely on often ill-maintained ferries for transportation.

More people could be forced onto ferries by Philippine Airlines, which operates 80 per cent of domestic flights, shut down this week, as announced.

In February 1996, 50 people died in the sinking of the Ferry Gretchen I in the central Philippines.

In December 1987, the ferry Dona Paz, also owned by Sulpicio, collided with an oil tanker off the island of Mindoro. More than 4,000 died in what is described as the world's worst peacetime maritime tragedy.

Spanish government seeks unity in answer to ETA

MADRID (R) — The Spanish government, which has vowed to continue its crackdown on ETA despite the Basque guerrillas' new ceasefire, prepared urgent meetings Saturday to seek broad political consensus on a response to the truce.

Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar, who cut short a state visit to Peru after ETA announced its unilateral truce, was due to hold talks with government officials immediately on his return to Spain Saturday afternoon.

He returns to a divided response among Spaniards and Basques over the ceasefire. A poll published in El Pais newspaper Saturday showed 59 per cent of Basques thought ETA's offer was sincere while 57 per cent of those questioned in the rest of Spain thought it was fake.

Shortly before the truce was announced, the government warned against a "fake truce" by ETA which it said could be making the move for tactical reasons.

Another poll in the Basque El Correo newspa-

per showed about two-thirds of Basques consider the ceasefire to be the "beginning of the end of the violence".

The El Pais poll showed an equal percentage of Basques and people in the rest of Spain — 42 per cent — thought the government now needed to see if there were real possibilities of change that could justify a turnaround in policy.

Deputy Premier Francisco Alvarez Cascos said Friday a united effort by all political parties was key to finding a way to end more than three decades of violence by ETA guerrillas.

Opposition parties have agreed to the need for consensus and plan to meet Aznar and other officials, possibly Sunday.

Basque President Jose Antonio Ardanza urged all parties to be united to take advantage of the ceasefire. "Unity at this time is totally, absolutely fundamental," he told state television. "If... we, democrats, were not able to move forward in a united way... I believe we would be the

real defrauders of peace." ETA's truce, modelled on the Irish Republican Army's ceasefire in Northern Ireland, took effect Friday. It was the third to be implemented in the group's bloody, 30-year fight for an independent homeland, but the first without an end date.

The government has reacted cautiously to the truce and Interior Minister Jaime Mayor Oreja said Friday there were no plans to scale back police efforts to hunt down ETA gunmen.

Authorities are concerned ETA, which has killed 800 people in its fight for independence, might use the ceasefire as a smokescreen to regroup its much-depleted forces.

An early test of the truce was expected to be whether young ETA supporters come out after dark this weekend in the Basque region in their usual "war of the streets".

The campaign, modelled after the Palestinian intifada, involving running battles with police, has been stepped up over the past

few months. Sources at the Basque Interior Ministry reported that masked youths set fire to the doorway of a local headquarters of ETA's political wing Herri Batasuna in the Basque town of Getxo.

Damage was minor, they said, and no arrests were made.

A mood of calm held over the second day of the truce. Basques urged the government to think carefully of its next move and not let the advance made by ETA go to waste.

ETA, which stands for Basque Homeland and Freedom in the Basque language, is one of the last home-grown guerrilla groups still operating in Western Europe.

In its ceasefire announcement, ETA left no doubt that its principal objective was still to create an independent state.

The group has said it would not give up its arms — a crucial condition set by the government before it would start peace negotiations.

Anwar declares open political war on Mahathir

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Ousted Malaysian deputy premier Anwar Ibrahim openly declared political hostilities against Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad Saturday after the jailing of two associates.

Anwar accused Mahathir of conducting a Gestapo-style smear campaign against him, raising the political temperature as Malaysia prepared to greet Queen Elizabeth II for a state visit to close the Commonwealth Games.

A rally backing the sacked leader is to be held in Kuala Lumpur's Merdeka (Freedom) Square as the queen starts her visit in the nearby St. Mary's Cathedral.

Anwar's outburst came after a court jailed an adopted brother of Anwar and another former associate to six months each. They admitted and were found guilty of letting the former deputy premier and finance minister sodomise them, the national Bernama news agency reported.

For the first time since he was

sacked on Sept. 2, Anwar openly accused his former mentor of plotting his downfall.

"He (Mahathir) is the chief antagonist. He is now orchestrating the entire mission," Anwar told a news conference. At a rally of 50,000 people Friday night, Anwar called on Mahathir to stand down. He took up the call again Saturday.

"This is a conspiracy involving the prime minister himself. The conspirators are now in a state of fear and panic because they realise it is difficult to control the wrath of the people."

Since his ousting, Anwar has been at the centre of a wide-ranging police inquiry into allegations ranging from sexual misconduct to treason. Anwar had previously said it was a high-level conspiracy.

"I thought initially that reason and sanity would prevail," Anwar said when asked why he had waited so long to openly accuse Mahathir.

"That is why I was cautious and guarded in my remarks. But these cheap political gimmicks on his part have gone

down too low. It continued with the harassment and torture of the people. He is unqualified to continue as the prime minister of this country," he said.

"Believe me, every two days people will be charged in court. This is the style of Gestapo & la Mahathir."

The authorities threw up a new surprise with the jailing of Anwar's adopted brother Sukma Darmawan Sasmitaat Madja and Pakistani Munawar Ahmad Anees. Bernama said they had pleaded guilty to letting Anwar sodomise them.

Bernama said Sukma, a 37-year-old boutique owner, was alleged to have committed the offence at Anwar's official residence where he has his own special room in April this year.

Munawar, 51, was a consultant and editor of a defunct English-language quarterly covering Islamic affairs. He is married with two children and has permanent resident status in Malaysia and the United States.

Described as a "friend and intellectual companion" to

Anwar, Munawar also admitted to the offence in March 1993 at Anwar's private home, Bernama added.

"The two events unfolded in court with such speed and timing that it confirms what I have been saying all along that there is a political conspiracy of the highest level to destroy my political career by means of character assassination of the most virulent nature," Anwar responded.

"I once again clearly and specifically deny that I have been involved in these despicable activities," he said, adding that the confessions were "extorted under dire circumstances and emotional trauma."

Anwar also faces allegations of bribery, abuse of power, sedition, jeopardising national security, interfering with police investigations and tampering with evidence. He has denied them all and has yet to be charged.

"I challenge them to be brave by taking me to court but I will fight to the end," Anwar said of the charges.

Talks on Congo in Uganda end early

ENTEBBE, Uganda (R) — Talks between the presidents of Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia to try to end fighting in the Democratic Republic of the Congo ended Saturday after just 90 minutes.

There was no sign at the meeting of representatives of Congo rebels who are fighting to overthrow President Laurent Kabila.

"These talks have gone on for less time than we expected," Zambian President Frederick Chiluba told reporters, but he declined to explain why they ended so soon.

"We (the Southern African Development Community) reiterate our position that we will abide by an immediate cessation of hostilities. Ceasefire modalities will include troop withdrawal and exchange of prisoners," Chiluba told reporters.

"I am happy to note certain sticking points that may have triggered misunderstanding have been resolved," he said, but declined to elaborate.

Chiluba was due to fly on to the Rwandan capital Kigali.

President Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania and Chiluba met with Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni at a hotel on the edge of Lake

Victoria as part of an SADC initiative.

Earlier attempts to broker an agreement between the warring parties broke down, in part because of the refusal of SADC heads of state and senior government officials to meet directly with the rebels as demanded by Rwanda and Uganda.

Zambia and Tanzania are both seen as neutral in a war that has dragged in Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia to back Kabila against a rebel uprising that began on Aug. 2.

Uganda has admitted sending troops to Congo to help the rebels, asserting the need to combat a separate rebellion against its own government.

Museveni also said this week his country stepped in to prevent the threat of genocide against ethnic Tutsis in Congo, mainly from the eastern Banyamulenge people.

Rwanda denies it has troops in Congo, despite independent reports to the contrary, but asserts the right to step in to prevent genocide.

The two leaders were due to fly on to the Rwandan capital for more talks.

Rebels were denied entry to an SADC summit meeting in Zimbabwe earlier this month.

Saint's blood liquefies again in Italian miracle

NAPLES, Italy (R) — The powdery substance many Neapolitans revere as the dried blood of their patron saint liquefied Saturday in a twice-yearly "miracle".

Superstitious Neapolitans believe that if the blood of the fourth-century St. Gennaro fails to liquefy, or takes a long time to do so, disaster is at hand.

For the city's archbishop Cardinal Michele Giordano, who is being investigated in a loan-sharking probe, Saturday's successful outcome was an especially good omen.

"Long live St. Gennaro, long live Michele, long live the cardinal," the faithful cheered when Giordano announced the "miracle" to some 3,000 gathered in Naples cathedral.

Giordano has been under investigation since August on suspicion of complicity in loan-sharking, extortion and criminal association following the arrest of his brother.

The cardinal has denied wrongdoing, saying he was guilty only of trying to help his cash-strapped brother. The scandal, in which police searched Giordano's offices, brought relations between the Vatican and

Italy to their lowest point in years.

The blood of St. Gennaro, kept in a glass vial in Naples cathedral, liquefied after nearly 90 minutes of prayer. Giordano described the event as "extraordinary".

The "miracle" has been recorded on set dates twice a year almost without fail for the past 600 years — Sept. 19, the saint's feast day, and the first Saturday in May.

This year's May "miracle" had special resonance for Italians since May 2 was the day on which the founding fathers of European Monetary Union (EMU) were chosen.

Calamity has struck on at least five occasions when the blood has failed to liquefy, including in 1527 when 40,000 people died from plague and in 1980, when 3,000 people died after an earthquake in southern Italy.

Italian scientists have confirmed the substance is blood but have not discovered why it liquefies regularly. Historians say there is no known mention of a supposed blood relic before 1389, more than 1,000 years after death.

Munich Oktoberfest starts, with politics on menu

MUNICH (R) — The mayor of Munich Saturday opened the city's annual Oktoberfest with the traditional Bavarian cry of "O'zapft is" — "The keg is tapped".

Mayor Christian Ude opened the first keg of the beer hinge in a packed tent on the festival site. He then joined Bavarian Premier Edmund Stoiber in a toast to a peaceful Oktoberfest.

Stoiber could have been forgiven for also offering a toast to his own success. His Christian Social Union party won a handsome state election victory last Sunday and politics will play a bigger role than usual at this year's Oktoberfest.

A hefty portion of election campaigning will join the traditional items of sausages and roast chicken on the menu.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl is due to put in an appearance at the celebrations just a few days before Germany's general election, which takes place a week Sunday.

He is to join his friend and finance minister, Theo Waigel, a Bavarian born and bred, to take part in the 165th festival.

The politicians will be among millions of visitors both local and inter-

national expected to join in the world's biggest beer party. It takes place in a huge tented village erected on an open space in central Munich called "the meadows" by locals.

Organisers say most places in the 14 cavernous beer tents, each with some 10,000 seats, have already been booked for the two-week festival.

As well the customary fare of beer and sausages, served by harpists in Bavarian dress, with the men in Lederhosen trousers, visitors will be treated to traditional brass band music.

Last year's festival welcomed some 6.4 million visitors, sold more than five million litres of beer, around 700,000 chickens and almost 64,000 pork sausages.

The Oktoberfest is expected to bring in around 1.6 billion marks (\$954.1 million) in sales and provide work for some 8,000 people.

The festival grew out of celebrations organised when Bavarian Crown Prince Ludwig married Princess Therese of Saxony-Hildburghausen on Oct. 12, 1810.

The festivities were so popular they became an annual event and evolved into the present-day Oktoberfest.

Hungry N. Korea braces for even worse harvest

BEIJING (R) — North Korea is bracing for a harvest even worse than last year's because of bad weather Saturday.

"This year's harvest is going to be worse than last year's," said Kathi Zellweger, director of international cooperation for the Catholic aid group Caritas in Hong Kong.

"And last year's was already a bad one," she said after flying to Beijing after a week-long visit to the hermit Stalinist state.

Zellweger said North Korean officials told her 148,000 hectares, or 7.8 per cent of arable land, had been affected by floods and bad weather in August. A lack of fertiliser has worsened the plight of farmers, she said.

Two years of floods followed by drought have led to hunger and malnutrition among North Korea's 22 million people.

A U.S. congressional team estimated after a recent visit that famine had killed 300,000 to 800,000 people in each of the past three years.

Kaesong, a city a few kilometres from the border with South Korea, is expected to produce only 40,000 tonnes of maize and rice this year compared with 58,000 last year, said Zellweger, who has visited North Korea 19 times since 1995.

In a good year, Kaesong produces 100,000 tonnes, she said.

She said Kaesong officials told her the region's harvest

would last about five months and that they would have no more food to distribute by January.

Zellweger said she was "shocked" at the huge number of malnourished children — from babies to adolescents — in Kaesong, which has a population of 344,000.

Aid agencies have said floods at the end of August hit seven North Korean provinces, leaving at least 50 dead or missing and wreaking havoc on maize crops and rice fields.

In Sinuiju city close to the Chinese border, hailstorms in August destroyed 40 per cent of the corn crop, Zellweger said.

Corn production in Sinuiju was expected to fall to two tonnes per hectare this year compared with 4.0-4.5 tonnes per hectare last year.

Caritas aims to raise \$6.2 million this year for North Korea but has had difficulty raising funds because of donor fatigue. Pyongyang's "not very good" image and disasters in other parts of the world, Zellweger said.

Japan said it would end any future food aid after North Korea launched a rocket over Japanese territory on Aug. 31.

Caritas has given North Korea \$17.2 million worth of food, fertilisers and plastic sheeting for farming since 1995.

North Korea's official media have said rains since June have reduced crops by up to 60 per cent.

Jordan Times

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Hands-off remedy

ARE THERE any quick fixes for unemployment in Jordan? Certainly not if unemployment is in the double digits and redundancies in the public sector account for nearly twice the number of jobless individuals.

The national conference to combat unemployment that begins in Amman today is a good start towards easing the problem through the identification of its causes and its magnitude. But judging from the titles of the papers that are being presented at the conference we seem to be beating around the bush.

The first day of the conference is devoted to the discussion of two papers, one presented by the government identifying the problem and one presented by the National Centre for Human Resources Development talking about coordinating educational outputs with market needs for labour.

While we do not expect the government paper to reveal much more than we already know about the issue and while we recognise that such a paper is an appropriate opening to the meeting we hope that it will come up with accurate figures about the problem.

As far as the second paper is concerned we have a question. Is any government or agency, in this age of globalisation and information revolution, capable of projecting what are the market needs and what jobs are being created? Could any one have expected the proliferation of computers, mobile phones, fast-food chains? And if any government agency could have predicted all of that, would it have been able to gear education to that end?

The answer to these questions is no. Especially when we admit day in and day out that the management, i.e. the civil service, that is deciding what we are able to do and what we are not, is itself backward and highly inefficient.

We therefore propose that the number one solution to unemployment, and beyond it poverty and other ills, is for government to pull back as much as possible and leave people to conduct their business with as few restrictions as possible.

Societies take care of themselves and adjust in many ways that no social scientist, let alone bureaucrat, can predict, or prescribe. What is needed is as little intervention as possible. And the best proof of this is the state that we are in including unemployment and overemployment, all the direct result of constant intervention by successive governments.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Fahed Fanek commented on Israeli political orientation in the region mostly on the Israeli-Syrian track. Fanek quoted Uzi Arad, Benjamin Netanyahu's adviser, as saying that Israel is willing to withdraw from the Golan Heights if Syria guarantees secure borders for Israel. Israel also expressed desire to withdraw from south Lebanon if the Lebanese give assurances that it can adequately prevent infiltration of guerrillas into northern Israel, said Fanek. The writer said Syria was able to secure safe borders with Israel even while Israel occupies the Golan Heights. Thus, Israel wants a permanent solution to its borders problem, said Fanek. Fanek expected a breakthrough in the Syrian-Israel track which will corner the Palestinians.

Al Dustour's Yaqub Jaber commented on the American operation on Afghanistan and its double standard policy in the region. The writer criticised the U.S. for its attempts to protect the Taliban, Islamist fundamentalist group, while the latter gives shelter and support to what Washington considers as America's number one enemy, Osama Ben Laden, who the U.S. accuses of masterminding the two bomb attacks on American embassies in Dar Es Salaam and Nairobi. Paradoxically, the U.S. warns Iran that it should not use force against the Taliban, and keeps silent on the Taliban's refusal to hand over Ben Laden, said Jaber. Iran responded that it was seeking all possible peaceful means with the Taliban. Jaber criticised Washington for the warning statement to Iran which serves only to protect its own national interests. The writer said the American strategic interest in that part of the world is its policy guideline, even though thousands of innocent civilians pay the price.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

How can peace hurt the economy?

IN PRINCIPLE peace must be good for the country and should produce many economic benefits. In fact, Jordanians expected an unprecedented economic prosperity as a result of signing the peace treaty with Israel. Poverty may disappear altogether, they thought, unemployment will be reduced to a bare minimum, and the man in the street will feel the difference and accordingly swallow the political cost of peace with Israel under the impact of the economic benefits.

These happy assumptions and the wishful thinking that went with them did not materialise. Unfortunately, what happened was exactly the opposite: Economic growth rate in Jordan dropped suddenly, unemployment rate rose substantially, poverty spread to cover one third of the population, and investments slowed down.

The pessimistic observers warned at the time that with formal peace with Israel, foreign investors, especially the Israelis, will invade the country economically, over-run its markets and overwhelm domestic activities. Nothing of the sort actually happened. If anything, foreign investments during the past four years were at a level close to zero. Why did things turn out worse than even the pessimists and other opponents of the peace treaty predicted?

What happened is that expectations were running too high. Officials allowed such expectations to rise, either through explicit promises or silence. They thought that such high expectations would help the historical deal go through and minimise ideological objections. What followed was full-scale frustration and disappointment, which affected the level of economic activity and caused a sort of setback.

In addition to this, the five-year interim period agreed on the Palestinian-Israeli track created an atmosphere of uncertainty which is obviously not conducive to new investments. Businessmen thought it wiser to wait and see pending the outcome of negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis, and the possible impact on Jordan.

The problem worsened after the Likud Party, led by Netanyahu took over the government in Israel. It became abundantly clear that Netanyahu is determined to kill the peace process on the Palestinian and Syrian tracks and freeze it on the Jordanian track. The failure of the Palestinian track will have serious negative consequences for Jordan's future. The positive expectations were thus transformed almost overnight into extremely negative expectations.

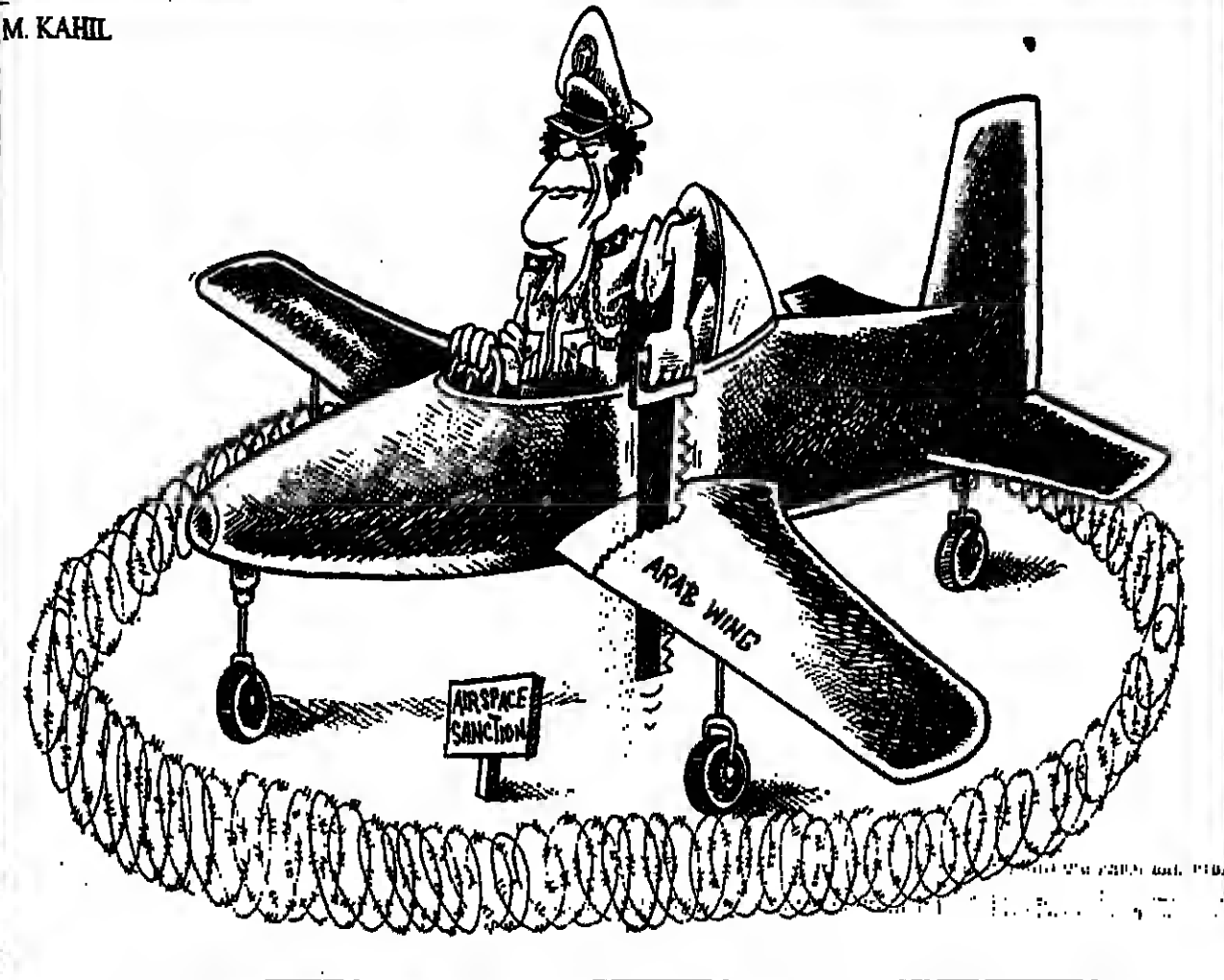
We have to add to that, that Israel did not open its

markets to Jordanian exports as was promised and agreed. Israel as an occupying power in the West Bank and Gaza is still denying Jordan access to the Palestinian markets. It is ironic that while Jordan was in the process of abolishing a 45-year-old economic boycott against Israel following the peace treaty, Israel was introducing its own economic boycott against Jordan.

On the political front, the democratic process in Jordan, which was advancing at an accelerating pace was almost halted, ceasing to advance, in response to the failure of the peace process which caused disappointment and embarrassment the Jordanian authorities vis-a-vis their own people. This in turn lowered their level of tolerance of opposition and dissenting views. The new press and publications law for example may be only one of the consequences of this failure. With internal political stagnation you don't expect economic expansion.

In order for Jordan to reap the peace dividends which were expected, the peace process must be put back on track, fulfilling its objectives, reaching its logical end: a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. There is no way to isolate Jordan from the developments taking place on the Palestinian front.

M. KAHIL



Cypriots make peace on the Internet

By G.H. Jansen

YOUNG GREEK and Turkish Cypriots have put forward "a new solution for the Cyprus problem." A "novel solution" based on "a commitment to union", reconciliation and reintegration rather than division and separation. At present there are on the negotiating table two proposals — the internationally-approved U.N. plan for a bizonal, bicomunal federation, and a plan put forward last week by the Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş for a "confederation" based on "separate and equal sovereign states" which has been rejected by the Greek Cypriots and the international community.

The "new solution" is also novel because it is the work of 100 people from both communities — mostly college students — communicating through the world wide web and e-mail. It is therefore, perhaps, the first ever peace plan concocted on the Internet.

The Internet is the only reliable means of contact for Cypriots living on the two sides of the Green Line which divides island. For last December, Denktaş banned members of his community from participating in inter-communal dialogue and social events. And, the recently upgraded U.N.-sponsored phone system linking the two sides of the island has broken down.

Importantly, the young people proposing the "new solution" have not been infected by decades of communal antagonism. Furthermore, they complain that politics here are dominated by the "same old faces in the same old places." And they are right, because Cypriot politics are being run by the very same people who were in charge of local affairs in the years before and after 1960 when Cyprus gained its independence from Britain following a struggle that began in the thirties and culminated in a Greek Cypriot armed rebellion in the mid fifties. The proponents of the new plan say these men are still fighting their old battles. Denktaş and Cyprus President Glafkos Clerides,

both in their seventies, first met in court during the freedom struggle. Denktaş acting for the prosecution on behalf of the British colonial administration and Clerides for his community's freedom fighters.

The plan has been submitted to the Cyprus foreign ministry, U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and presidential envoy to Cyprus Richard Holbrooke. So far only the foreign ministry has responded by saying that any solution must be in line with U.N. resolutions. The new plan is certainly not out of line with these resolutions.

The brain behind this plan is Savvas Savides, who lives and works in the U.S. as president of a computer software company, who in the background notes of the plan explains its novelty. "The Internet recognises no geographic boundaries. Thus, members of the two communities can work together towards a common future, free from the division and intransigence which have plagued Cypriot political leaders" since Turkey invaded and occupied the northern third of the island in 1974.

Savides insists that the U.N.-backed bizonal, bicomunal federation would involve the creation of "too many governments (i.e. two communal administrations and a central authority). Everyone (in Cyprus) would be a government employee."

He is particularly critical of the Greek Cypriot side, "most Greeks are expecting a solution based on what they are going to get. They have to get out of that box and put themselves in the shoes of the other community." This is certainly refreshing thinking.

In contrast to the federal and confederal schemes, the Savides plan is structured so that it does "not introduce permanent division, border lines, land reallocation" as well as three administrations. The plan also allows Turkey to "gracefully disengage from Cyprus as an occupying military force and remain as a cultural influence and friendly neighbour."

The practicable points of the plan are as follows:

(1) Allow the Turkish army to

remain for five years but restrict their presence to a military base leased to Turkey. A small group of Turkish and Greek army officers would become consultants to the Cyprus army.

(2) Establish a ministry of Turkish Cypriot affairs, with a minister elected by the Turkish Cypriots, which would be given a guaranteed budget based on certain percentage of the Gross National Product. These funds would enable the minority to maintain its culture, educational, religious and other institutions.

(3) A Turkish Cypriot would be appointed as interim president for four years after which elections open to all candidates would be held.

To Indians, this point should recall the proposal made by Mahatma Gandhi just before Indian independence that Muhammad Ali Jinnah should be the first prime minister of independent India. The Congress party, not consulted by the Mahatma, angrily rejected the idea out of hand, making partition inevitable.

(4) All refugees should be allowed to return to their homes and the land titles and deeds in force before the occupation should be honoured. This would restore the status quo preceding the Turkish occupation.

The Savides plan, which is only a starting point rather than a blueprint for reunification, ends by giving a website to which other suggestions can be sent, indicating that Savides' points are not the be-all and end-all of a final settlement.

The most important element in this plan is the belief that the two very small Cypriot communities, some 750,000 people in all, can live and work together in a unitary state rather than accept some sort of camouflaged partition with all the suspicion and bad feeling that division generates, as it has in Ireland and the Subcontinent over the past half century although in both instances partition was agreed before it was implemented.

The writer is a Nicosia-based freelance journalist specialising in Middle East issues.

LETTERS

No need for 'trashy' columns

To the editor:

AS AN Israeli currently living in the U.S., I've written you from time to time to comment on issues of concern. However, I never thought I'd be writing about Bill Clinton's "personal" life.

Frankly, I was surprised and a bit disappointed upon reading the column by Gwynne Dyer (Lowdown impeachment blues — 16-9). Though I may disagree with your viewpoint from time to time, I always expect you to provide a sober and wholesome perspective. I found Dyer's piece rife with the kinds of references usually found in the lesser tabloids of the U.S. and Britain. Specifically, there is no need to speak of "full-throated denials." And comments about the sex lives of sheep are certainly not necessary in a family newspaper — even if they are attributable to Aristotle.

Although we in Israel have no lack of trashy journalism, there still are a great number of Israelis (perhaps half the population) who prefer more traditional and restrained reporting. This is one of the elements that many of us on both sides of the border have in common with each other.

There's no need for the Jordan Times to employ the more questionable practices of Fleet Street. I hope that you'll revert to upholding the standards one has come to expect from your fine publication.

Gregg "Gershon" Snelson
 Boston, USA

Criminal collusion

By Dr. Asem Hamdan

NOT LONG ago a British newspaper, The Guardian, carried a disturbing news item which failed to get the international attention it deserved. The item concerned a Pentagon report of three Dolphin submarines received by Israel from Germany. It also mentioned Germany's offer of technical support to Israel in fitting cruise missiles on the submarines. This would of course render the submarines capable of carrying nuclear warheads. Even Arab and Islamic military analysts and statesmen failed to react to the news.

It is obvious that European nations vie with one another to arm Israel while simultaneously announcing that they oppose the spread of weapons. Don't they realise the risks involved in such duplicity? Some analysts have warned that Israel will soon launch a new generation of Jericho missiles with a range of three-thousand miles and a payload of one tonne of explosives.

While the United States is blindly loyal to the Zionist state, Germany has evidently volunteered to assume the unethical role formerly played by Britain in supporting the worst dictatorial state in the world. It is both lamentable and ludicrous, particularly in the present context, that Israel imposes its desires on Germany which will bear 50 per cent of the cost of the submarines. Israel views this of course as partial compensation for Hitler's barbaric excesses against the Jews. There is a current tendency to believe that only Jews were

Hitler's victims, but the facts do not support this view. The trend is rooted in Western acceptance of Israel's deftly implanting and manipulating racial prejudices. This acceptance is seen in Germany's technology to be used against Arabs and Muslims. Further, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl has put forward the ridiculous suggestion of a tripartite alliance of European powers, the United States and Israel. This suggestion also reflects German concern at Turkey's military pact with Israel.

Turkey hopes to exploit the alliance in achieving its cherished ambition to get into the European Common Market. The Turkish military establishment has of course attempted to root out religious influence in the country and to persecute individuals suspected of being strictly religious. The government's injustice is particularly glaring as no ban is applied to Christians, Jews or Buddhists — all of whom have full freedom to express their religious identity. This certainly suggests that Islam is seen as the biggest enemy of the Turkish military establishment.

Western nations — Germany, America and Britain — earlier colluded with the white South African regime to develop chemical and biological weapons for the apartheid government. Once that government was ousted, the West has now continued its support of another repressive government by helping Israel to develop a nuclear arsenal estimated at 200 warheads.

— Arab News

Dr. Fahed Fanek
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'Beacon of hope' changes his tune

He has been portrayed as a democrat and staunch believer in African unity. But sending his troops into the Democratic Republic of Congo has brought closer scrutiny of Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni and led to charges that he has predatory desires to create his own empire as *Crespo Seburn* reports, a freelance journalist formerly with *The Business World* (Kampala).

SEVERAL YEARS ago, President Yoweri Museveni's pragmatism and commitment to democracy and economic reforms earned him a place as one of Africa's "new breed of leaders."

He impressed everyone, from rural villagers to foreign leaders, with his grasp of African history and current affairs. In the Great Lakes region his leadership and influence played an instrumental role in bringing peace to the troubled area.

After winning the 1996 presidential elections, the first in 16 years, Museveni promised to rebuild Uganda into an economic and military power which would then forge a regional bloc the international community would have to take seriously.

He started by introducing a series of economic reforms, attracting \$800 million in foreign aid which went to rebuild his shattered state. Happy with the pace of reforms, foreign investors delivered

\$5 billion worth of investment.

An impressed Madeleine Albright, U.S. secretary of state, described him as a "beacon of hope," while Ugandans praised him for rehabilitating their country's long damaged reputation.

However, by sending troops into the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in August, Museveni's image as a democrat and fighter for African unity has been tainted, allege supporters of DRC President Laurent Kabila.

They accuse him of having developed predatory instincts, while ordinary Ugandans are increasingly voicing their disapproval over his foreign policy and autocratic way of governing.

The government's unilateral decision to send troops into the DRC also caused consternation among parliamentarians who complained they had not been consulted.

Foreign Minister Eriya Kategaya's explanation that their presence in DRC was to safeguard Ugandan security interests by creating a security zone did little to contain the politicians' anger.

Museveni now faces a backlash from several African countries. He is on speaking terms with few of his neighbours and fears of an impending invasion were fuelled when soldiers were recruited and airlifted to Western Uganda, ostensibly to dig

trenches.

They went chanting: "Down with Kabila! Down with Dos Santos! Down with Mugabe!", according to airport staff.

Officially the Ugandan People's Defence Force (UPDF) — which Museveni has spent nearly \$200 million a year arming — was being prepared to be an outfit which could intervene in African trouble spots.

But UPDF soldiers captured recently in the DRC allege they were following a different agenda. They told their captors Museveni was bent on creating his own empire stretching from Eritrea down to Tanzania.

It is a laughable tale, but it spread like wildfire through the thickets and savannah of Central Africa, and was considered gospel truth in Zimbabwe and the DRC.

Museveni's admirers are confused by the recent events. Focus Africa, the BBC quarterly magazine, ran his portrait on its most recent cover and wondered whether he is a messiah or a megalomaniac.

Others are giving deeper analysis to Museveni's interventionist policies, arguing internal domestic reforms in neighbouring countries offer more hope to regional democracy.

Mahmood Mamdani, a Ugandan professor of African Studies at the University of Cape Town in South Africa, has often criticised Museveni for using untenable prescriptions to solve the security problems facing Uganda.

"It must be tempting to think Ugandan and Rwandan problems come from across the borders and not from within," he said.

"The next step (will be) to conclude that the antidote to their problems is external intervention rather than internal reforms."

Other commentators, such as newspaper columnist Charles Onyango Obbo, argue Museveni and his allies strong-arm tactics do not solve anything.

"A country that has guns and soldiers does not bring anything new to the table. But one that brings neutrality and skilful diplomacy will most likely be listened to because he would be the only one with the product."

Museveni's recent actions have led to an obvious strain in relations with Uganda's neighbours, some of whom believe that, unless there is a united front against him, they will be devoured one by one.

"Nairobi has always been uncomfortable with Museveni's regional policies," says Michael Okema, a Tanzanian political scientist who believes Kenya supports Kabila because of Uganda's perceived expansionist policies.

"Yesterday it was Rwanda, today it is Congo, who knows who could be next?" he says, referring to Museveni's support for the government of Paul Kagame in Rwanda.

As anti-Museveni sentiments brew in the region, Ugandans have also begun to doubt whether their presence in the DRC is based on genuine security concerns.

The meddlesome behaviour of Idi Amin in the late 1970s cost Uganda a great deal — financially and in international prestige — and the experience is still fresh in their minds. A return to those dark days is not what Ugandans want.

Perhaps the greatest worry stemming from Museveni's recent actions is the impact they will have on future African leaders.

John Githongo, director of the African Strategic Research Institute in Nairobi, is troubled by what he has seen.

"The apparent willingness of our new breed of leaders in Kigali and Kampala to plunge the region into yet another destabilising period has disappointed even people like me who have always been broadly sympathetic with their goals."

— Gemini News

You talking to me?

Are you on-message? Do you even understand the phrase? English is changing fast. David Rowan provides a user-friendly update on the latest additions to the language

TEN YEARS ago, you would have spilt your drink if someone had asked whether you were a sinner or a sinner. In 1998, you will know this is a simple enquiry as to your marital status: whether you have a Single Income, No Boyfriend, and are Absolutely Desperate or a Single Income, Two Children and an Oppressive Mortgage.

Had it been suggested a couple of years ago that you reply by bookmaking this suit for a future, date, or responding sharply that you would not consider down-dating, you might have professed ignorance. Nowadays know that you are facing a choice between taking a phone number and rejecting your admirer as inadequate.

Language is permanently updating itself, and in the 1990s faster than ever. And whether we're adolescents (stepped in youth culture when we're old enough to know better) or trustafarians (living off trust funds in West London), we ignore new words under peril of losing touch. The English that keeps forcing dictionaries to update steals its new words from the slang of subcultures, the jargon of specialists, the demands of new technology and new social trends — the Blair babes' fear of going off-message, or the bobbing of an American whose wife cut him off in his prime.

Many of the new terms serve only to hide what people want to say — from the euphemisms of business chiefs to the jargon of experts who want to keep you in the dark. But many add colour, humour and richness to life or meet a new need in a user-friendly way (like the term user-friendly, which turns 18 this year).

Whenever a need arises, some part of society invents a word or expression. It might be a change in the job market, which in the past five years has brought about the Dump (the Desperate Unemployed Mature Professional), Or new technology, which has brought alpha geeks to every company's IT department: they're the dull techies who become your heroes when things go wrong. Subcultures are busy inventing terms to stay ahead of mainstream society. Groups with little economic power — from road protesters to inner-city rap fans — can reclaim their language. Skateboarders talk about bongos and swellbongs, so only the initiated know they are referring to injuries.

Sometimes mainstream culture borrows from these small or groups: take that and dis, which began as rap slang but now saturates the commercial teen magazines. Professional groups also invent new terms to stay ahead of the rest of us. Doctors might talk about difficult patients as Gomers (short for Get Out of My Emergency Room), or chat about treating a woman patient with a Tube (a Totally Unnecessary Breast Examination), reinforcing their group identity with terms designed to keep outsiders ignorant.

At other times, the goal is deliberately to mislead. When a supermarket tries to attract

shelf-stackers in ads offering an 'ambient replenishment opportunity' as Safeway has been doing, or a company chairman regrets he has to recruit you, the expressions obscure the truth. You can almost sympathise with the Chrysler managers who had to talk down the 5,000 sackings at their Wisconsin plant earlier this decade, which they officially referred to as part of a career alternative enhancement programme.

Some new words emerge simply because they are enjoyable to use. There might be few occasions when you need to refer to chic gay women as lipstick lesbians, but any journalist will alight upon such a colourful term at any opportunity. The same goes for feminism, the right-wing radio hosts' term for hard-line feminists, or the voice-jail that traps you in automated phone systems; invented words delivered in such image-filled packages stand a good chance of survival. But if a new word is not mediagenic (think photogenic) and extend it for this media-led age), it will disappear, even if it means a linguistic need.

There is no shortage of new words. The New Oxford Dictionary of English, launched last month, includes more than 2,000 for the first time, from shock jocks and happy-clappers to slackers and downshifters. Its editor, Judy Pearsall, puts the fecundity of English down to its vastness as a world language. Spoken by more than 300 million people as a first language, and many more as a second, it also dominates computing and business, pop and medicine. English is all-absorbing, Pearsall says. It hasn't been fettered by a language authority that seeks to keep words out. Certainly English has always stolen: from nothing like the Académie Française to keep our utterances correct. It has historically added anything it fancied, from window (Old Icelandic) and schmaltz (Yiddish) to veranda (Hindi) and parliament (Old French).

In the 1990s, the pace appears to be speeding up. Partly this is because life has become faster: as soon as you master the fax, along comes e-mail; you're just coming to terms with the New Lad, when you discover that andropause — the male equivalent of the menopause — has moved from medical journals to dinner parties. With our fast-changing word pantries, our increasing sexual self-classification and our growing advertising and media literacy, hardly a day goes by without a previously unrecorded phrase appearing in one of the broadsheets. And if you don't pick them up first time, don't worry: lexicographers are increasingly devoting resources to monitoring new words. Oxford has a separate department reading everything from Rolling Stone to Unix World. Databases make it easier for them to spot new usages, intense competition makes it prudent for them to shout about them. This summer Chambers and Collins also launched new dictionaries in a scramble for the back-to-school market. But can our neologisms genuinely tell us much about life in the 1990s? Will future historians be able to understand 1998 Britain simply by studying Viagra and political spinmeister?

Judy Pearsall notes that

trends are emerging. We're eating and buying a much-wider variety of foods, hence all the new vegetables and ingredients bruschetta to acopops. Then there's employment, or the lack of it — presentism, downshifting or down-sizing. Things have become less stable in the workplace, as we're all outsourcing. Future social historians will also be able to point to our leisure fashions: home shopping, and new types of sport: basejumping, skysurfing, weightboarding. Then there's alternative medicine. And lonely-hearts ads: the historians will discover that these were important. In politics, a lot more of the emphasis now is on image, so words have to be controlled more.

A future historian might tell us that our politicians were obsessed with presentation around 1997. We suddenly had to learn about prebital, that development of rebuttal and rapid rebuttal, saturating reporters with facts before something had occurred; we learnt that folletting (after Barbara) meant rethinking the presentation of an outdated object, such as a Labour MP to give it wider appeal; and we discovered the importance of staying on-message.

We will still be seen to be keen to classify ourselves (or at least, the marketing people will be); it might not be as rigidly as those 1980s fixtures the yuppies, lombards and dinkies, but more broadly now as those in the sandwich generation (caught between bringing up children and caring for older relatives), or as terminally bored slackers. And in sex and relationships, there will have been hasbians who used to be lesbians, to the manists who seek to stand up to feminists. We will also be seen to have had a sense of humour, from the lunch box that defines the male genitals, to the rumpy that the tabloids decided had to replace those older terms nookie, rumpy pumpy and steamy sex sessions.

Not all of these terms will last. The language is always moving on, as people vote with their tongues, and new words are often the first to be left behind. David Barnhart's Neo-Words, a 1991 collection, already looks dated: that 1985 term blipnet, an ad compressed to a few seconds, died quickly, as did wogging, jogging interspersed with periods of walking; but where would we be without HIV (1986, spotted in Scientific American)? The 1990 Longman Register of New Words was right about lager-lout and eco-friendly; but popstrel, a young female pop singer? Or yummies, meaning Muslim yuppies?

Some coinages, already, have become so indispensable that it is hard to imagine how we coped without them: was there really life before the tele-marketers kept ringing us at home and newspapers worried about dumbing down? What did we call cowanions or policy wonks before we had the words for them? We can only guess where the language will take us next. We know for sure that Viagra, a word nobody had heard last year, will come to define one 1998 obsession. Beyond that, it's up to you and me.

— The Guardian

Books

Suicide and courage for woman in chains

"Sabriya — Damascus Bitter Sweet"
Ulfaat Idilbi
Interlink Books, 1997
185 pages
JD11.00

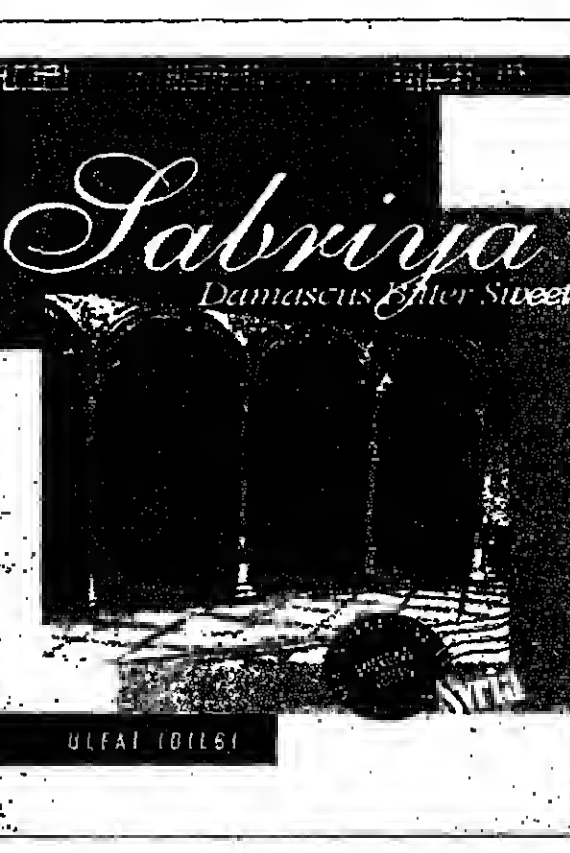
ULFAAT IDILBI, one of Syria's most renowned writers, was married at the age of 17 before she could complete her education. When reading Sabriya, one can't help but wonder if Idilbi was trying to sketch another scenario for her own life had she not been lucky and persistent in following her own devices.

Sometime in the 1920s, Sabriya hangs herself to a garden. She leaves her diaries to her only niece, and throughout the book, both women take the role of the narrator in recounting Sabriya's painful life and the circumstances that finally led her to commit suicide.

The book begins by asking a highly controversial question: "Is suicide an act of courage or cowardice?" In a male dominated society, Sabriya comes across as a distinct character, emotionally incapable of dealing with her oppressive society. She is the only daughter among three sons: Raghib, a typical chauvinist, Mahmud; a kind yet bland character, and Sami, an idealist with a passion for revolution and social liberation. Sabriya's enthusiasm for the revolt and passion for knowledge are stifled by her family; on one hand, she is oppressed by her father and older brother, and on the other, she is "paralysed" by her mother's submissiveness which deters her from running away for fear that she might dishonour the family. Sabriya's only hope lies in two people; her brother Sami, and her lover Adil. Their relentless support for Sabriya inflames her eagerness to become a part of the revolt. But her attempts

to enact this are thwarted by her family. In the course of the bitter events, both Sami and Adil are killed. Sabriya concludes that all hope is lost and so she abandons the rebellious spirit and decides to "live as one who is dead" p.171.

The most remarkable exhibition of the emotional blackmail enacted by the family is that Sabriya's decision to kill herself comes at an



early stage in her life after Adil's death, but her sense of duty towards her parents and fear of dishonouring them compels her to spend a lifetime supporting them until they are dead. In return, Sabriya's parents are well aware of the suffering they have imposed on their daughter, but they are paralysed by their own values and instead of taking drastic measures to improve her situation they only touch the surface by seducing her with presents hoping that she will be distracted from her inevitable pain.

The book clearly asserts how political unrest entwines with the feminist struggle. It exposes the preposterous contradiction between people striving to liberate their country from the French occupation when "half the nation remains paralysed" because of their inability of free themselves from repressive traditional values. During the Twenties, these values were so oppressive that it was easier to bear a political struggle than even thinking of allowing the slightest amount of freedom for women. At one point, Sami predicts that: "When we have achieved our independence we shall embark on a battle among ourselves fiercer than the one we are waging with the imperialists" p.99.

The book might be an "overdose" of tragedy, but it is a sincere account of the most troubled times in Syria. Ulfaat created Sabriya with supreme familiarity indicating her own passion and pain. She creates several dimensions for all her characters, exposing their weaknesses to conclude that at the end of the day everybody became a victim of their own decaying morals, which not only defeated women, but crippled the entire nation.

— Dima Hamdam

Kundera's 'identity' never in doubt

"Identity"
Milan Kundera.
Faber and Faber
1998
\$20.00

KUNDERA'S LATEST work is written in the same vein as his last and outstandingly original novel, "Slowness." Here again, Kundera renders a simple plot in clear and unpretentious language, while at the same time exposing, mocking, analysing, preaching, and most important of all, asking many difficult questions about modern existence.

"Identity" continually prompts one to think about the point just made, to analyse it, and to personalise it. This is at least one aspect of Kundera's genius — his themes, plots, and ideas are so fundamentally and universally human, that reading any of his books triggers self-interrogation and, sometimes, revelation.

The seeds of "Identity" lie in the opening yarn of "Laughable Loves," a collection of Kundera's short stories about relationships. In that first story, Kundera tells of two lovers who, in attempts to inject greater excitement in their love life, play a game in which each portrays a character far removed from his or her seemingly real self. The woman, mistakenly believing that her new role arouses her lover, decides to continue playing the game well after the man has decided to go back to "reality." The way in which the woman excels in her adopted role leads the man to doubt her true identity, which in turn leads him to doubt their entire relationship.

The plot of "Identity" is similarly simple. Chantal, a divorcee whose son died at five years of age, and her young boyfriend, Jean Marc, are vacationing in Normandy when Chantal tells Jean Marc out of the blue that "Men don't turn to look at me anymore." When they return to Paris, Chantal starts receiving letters from a secret admirer, who writes about his infatuation with her and

how he follows her every move like a spy. Against her best judgement, and despite her complete love of Jean Marc, Chantal is flattered by these letters and starts filing them assiduously in her cupboard amongst her brassieres and underpants. After a series of such letters, Chantal realises that her secret admirer is none other than Jean Marc, who had written these letters with the sincere intention of making her feel good about herself again. Chantal misinterprets his intentions, believing that he was writing to prove that she was ready to be unfaithful to him, and thus providing him with an easy way out of this relationship with an older woman.

The story climaxes in two sadly farcical scenes, which are vintage Kundera.

Unlike the short story from "Laughable Loves", "Identity" is full of sub-plots and marginal story lines. For example, there is the death of an estranged friend of Jean Marc's, whom Jean Marc had abandoned for not defending him against his corporate enemies. There is Chantal's relationship with her ex-husband's family, whom she had disliked immensely yet so surreptitiously loved them. There is also Chantal's work in an advertising agency, which mostly produces commercials for diapers and toilet paper products. Interspersed throughout the story are episodes of confused or disappearing identities: Jean Marc mistakenly running eagerly towards a woman who turns out not to be Chantal; a dream of a woman who looks totally different from Chantal, yet he is sure it is her; and a conversation overheard by Chantal about a TV programme that tells stories of missing people.

There is no doubt that, like "Slowness," this book is an indictment of the modern way of living. I feel that one of "Identity's" major themes is that the modern world, with all its economic realities, imposes the constant need to change, or at least to

a more specific and basic level, Kundera is expressing the timeless limitations of humankind against which we are constantly struggling.

For example, Kundera describes at length the biological needs and actions of the human body, from the constant movement of the eyelids to their unavoidable bodily activities. He highlights these as illustrative of the myriad imperfections of the human body, and, ultimately, reflects sardonically: "They both of them (Jean Marc and Chantal) have bodies where their poor souls have almost no room." What Kundera seems to be saying, is that all humans are inescapably saddled with so many basic needs and desires that our identities are not as naturally distinctive as we take them to be. If we limit our lives solely to the fulfilment of these basic needs and desires, then our identities become blurred. Our true identity is born out of our attempts to go beyond all that is purely biological and mechanical about our existence; it lies in the distinctive spiritual paths that we chart for ourselves.

This point is best illustrated in the context of relationships. The more we focus on basic desire, the less identity we ascribe to our lovers. Hence, when Jean Marc confused Chantal with somebody else, Chantal became replaceable, interchangeable. True love then, like true identity, lies in rising above what is banal and indistinguishable.

Read this book. It is a thought-provoking work of rare intensity and novelty of theme. You will find in "Identity" all the hallmarks of the Kundera novel — the ease and effortless of his writing style, the extraordinary depth of his analysis, and, most important of all, the uncompromising honesty with which he addresses so many sensitive issues. Of all Kundera's many great works, "Identity," with its original subject matter, stands out as a first among equals.

— Nasser Ali Khasawneh

Syria cuts advertising costs for Lebanese products

BETRUT (R) — Syria has given Lebanese companies a discount of about 70 per cent on the cost of advertising their products in the state-controlled Syrian media, Lebanese Economy and Trade Minister Yassin Jaber said late Friday.

He said the move aimed at enhancing trade ties between the two countries.

"This decision has a special importance as the Lebanese industrialists, merchants and heads of tourism, hotel and service companies could advertise in the Syrian media with less than a third of the cost they had to pay previously," Jaber said at a news conference.

He said Syria's state-owned Arab Advertising Organisation has given Lebanese businessmen

the same rate it offers Syrians to help them introduce their products to the local market.

Lebanese businessmen said the decision gave the expensive Lebanese products marketing tools to compete with cheaper locally-made Syrian products.

Both countries in March agreed to abolish customs duties on locally-made products for four years starting in 1999. The deal allows Syrian and Lebanese manufacturers to export to the other country without paying fees or duties.

The head of the Association of Lebanese Industrialists, Jack Sarraf, told Reuters the new, lower rate will help boost Lebanese exports to Syria.

"From 1999 the bilateral agreement will be implemented. The tools of today are marketing tools to improve our introduction to the Syrian market," he said.

"The (Syrian) market was totally closed to us before. Now we have the chance for the first time to sell our products there... We are trying to cooperate with the Syrians on the basis that both 16 million (Syrian) consumers and four million (Lebanese) consumers try to have one product and try to sell it to the world," he added.

Syria is the main power-broker in Lebanon, where it has some 35,000 troops. They have several economic, political, security and military cooperation agreements.

General Supplies Department

INTERNATIONAL TENDER INVITATION

1. The Ministry of Health in Jordan has received a loan from the World Bank towards the cost of buying medical & office equipment (Health management project). Tendering is hereby open to all suppliers of all member countries of the World Bank.
2. Interested tenderers may obtain copies of tender documents from the General Supplies Department Amman, against a non-refundable fee.
3. All offers must be accompanied by Bid Bond from an acceptable bank in the amount of 3% of the CIF price valid for 150 days.
4. Bid must be deposited at General Supplies Department not later than 11.00 a.m. and will be opened in the presence of bidders' representatives.

Tender No.	Description	Fee of Tender Documents	The deadline for submitting offers before 12:30	The deadline for submitting offers before 11:00 a.m.
286/98	Medical Equipment for Princess Basma Hospital - Surgical Equipment for Neurosurgery & Brain. - Equipment for Anaesthesia, ICU and CCU Divisions. - Equipment & Instruments for cholelithotomy, general surgery & orthopaedic divisions. - Equipment for ophthalmic clinic. - Equipment for ENT Division. - Equipment for Internal & Dermatology Divisions. - Equipment for CSSD unit. - Equipment for Emergency unit.	17/10/98	18/10/98	JD135

Interested party should refer to General Supplies Department at Al-Madinah Al-Riyadiyah area & should be accompanied with a valid professional licence & commercial certificate in order to obtain a complete tender specification and conditions.

Mahmoud M. Abul Ghanam
General Supplies Department
Director General

دائرة اللوازم العامة إعلان عطاءات

تعلن دائرة اللوازم العامة عن طرح العطاء المعلن تفصيلاته أدناه والممول من البنك الدولي وفقاً لما يلي:
1. يجوز لجميع المانحين من الدول الأعضاء في البنك الدولي الاشتراك في هذا العطاء.
2. يمكن للمنافسين المتقدمين مراجعة دائرة اللوازم العامة مستخدمين معهم رخصة من سارية المفعول والسجل التجاري للحصول على وثائق دعوة العطاء مقابل الثمن المعلن إزاء العطاء.
3. ترفيق بالعروض كغالب دخول مالية بنسبة لا تقل عن 3% من قيمة العرض على أساس CIF سارية المفعول لمدة 150 يوماً.

الرقم المتسلسل	رقم دعوة العطاء	اللوازم المطلوبة	الحد الأدنى للمنافسة	آخر موعد لتقديم العطاءات	آخر موعد لتلقي العطاءات
1	98/286	أجهزة طبية مستلزمات الإبرية	135 دينار	18/10/98	17/10/98

المدير العام
محمود أبو الغانم

Head of WTO warns against protectionism

GENEVA (AFP) — The director general of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) said Friday that a resort to protectionism in the face of the current world financial upheavals would be "a self-defeating strategy."

"Protectionism is a contagious and divisive instrument that will not solve anyone's problems," said Renato Ruggiero during a formal meeting of the WTO general council.

He stressed the interdependence of economies, whether they were developed or not. "We have already seen in recent years how strong growth in the developing world can radiate its very substantial benefits in the advanced countries. By the same token, we are now seeing how the decline of growth

in part of the developing world can also have major repercussions for the whole of the world economy," he said.

Ruggiero said it was impossible to prolong indefinitely a situation where some countries are inside a system with rights and obligations while others are not.

"We have to reiterate our will to continue the present negotiations with the 32 accession candidates and to reaffirm our strong determination to conclude these negotiations in the shortest period of time," he said.

He added that to achieve this end would mean asking countries applying for membership of the WTO, which already includes 132 states, to "also show a necessary degree of flexibility and creativity."

Lebanon, Kuwait agree to free industrial trade

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon and Kuwait agreed Saturday to phase out customs duties on locally-made industrial products over the coming four years, Lebanese Economy and Trade Minister Yassin Jaber said.

The official National News Agency quoted Jaber as saying at a news conference that the agreement has put a timetable to cut 25 per cent of customs duties on industrial products annually.

"As we sign this agreement today we move a step forward to free immediately a number of industrial products of both countries and put an agenda to free completely industrial products over the coming four years with an average of 25 per cent annually," said Jaber.

The agreement was signed by Jaber and Kuwaiti Trade

Minister Abdul Aziz Al Dakhlil in the Lebanese capital.

Lebanon and Kuwait in 1996 signed a deal to free trade exchange between the two countries including agricultural and animal products.

Jaber said the deal was a step towards establishing the Arab free trade zone.

India insists on rosy economic future

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India's top finance officials put a defiantly positive spin on the country's economic prospects, predicting strong growth with successful inflation and budget deficit controls.

Despite a difficult start to the current fiscal year beginning April 1, Finance Minister

Yashwant Sinha pledged that and the deficit would be kept within the targets laid out in his June budget.

"I will not allow the deficit to cross 5.6 per cent (of gross domestic product)," he told an economic conference.

Reviewing the six months since the Hindu nationalist-led

coalition came to power, Sinha said the government was only just beginning to disprove the country's negative financial image at home and abroad.

The minister admitted that India's nuclear tests in May, followed by U.S.-led sanctions and the cancellation of some overseas development

aid, had a "tugely negative impact" on national and international sentiment.

The situation was worsened by a sovereign rating downgrade by U.S. credit assessor Moody's Investors Service, the deepening Asian financial crisis and problems in Russia.

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	MLG	SGD
US Dollar	1.0000	1.9364	0.6948	1.3333	131.85	1.6243	1675.20	1.9102	5.6840
DE Mark	0.5000	1.0000	0.3466	0.6558	65.55	0.8936	936.26	1.1275	3.3547
GB Sterling	1.4603	2.9206	1.0000	1.4893	160.33	2.0048	2004.81	2.3110	6.9548
CH Franc	0.7177	1.4354	0.4263	1.0000	94.46	1.0932	1109.32	1.2722	3.7277
JP Yen	0.0074	0.0148	0.0062	0.0074	1.0000	0.0074	7.4000	0.0084	0.2414
CA Dollar	0.6000	1.1911	0.3598	0.6913	71.16	1.0000	1000.00	1.1400	3.3823
IT Lira	0.0000	1.0000	0.0000	0.0000	1273.72	0.0000	1.0000	1.0000	2.8748
NL Guilder	0.0035	0.0070	0.0025	0.0050	68.89	0.0035	35.00	0.0040	0.1174
FR Franc	0.0166	0.0332	0.0118	0.0236	23.64	0.0166	16.60	0.0190	0.5540

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	1.0000	0.7090	3.7500	0.3770	0.3638	0.3038	0.3727	1612.00	3.4025
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	1.0000	5.2900	0.5317	0.5137	0.4285	0.5180	2133.29	4.7890
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.1880	1.0000	0.1000	0.07	0.0810	0.08	403.27	0.9072
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8807	9.9491	1.0000	0.96	0.8089	0.74	4012.15	9.0288
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	1.0304	1.0304	1.0000	0.8935	1.01	415.54	0.9348
Kuwait Dinar	3.2915	2.3338	12.3488	1.2409	1.198	1.0000	12.09	4978.50	0.9348
Emirate Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0212	1.0208	0.9910	0.8827	1.00	411.82	0.9284
Lebanese/1000	0.66	0.4688	2.4787	0.2482	0.2406	0.2009	0.2482	1000.00	2.2486
Egyptian	0.2939	0.2084	1.1023	0.1108	1.0697	0.8853	1.0794	444.53	1.0000

Energy		
Oil	Last	Previous
Brent	0.00	0.00
W. Texas	15.48	15.03
Bonny	0.00	0.00
Dubai	13.30	12.94
UL Gas	133.00	133.00

Mid-East Currencies				
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4518	0.1880	0.3770
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.4614	0.1919	0.3784
KW Dinar	3.2915	5.57724	1.95771	4.58926
BH Dinar	0.3770	0.49438	1.57778	3.68822
CY Pound	1.9904	3.3719	1.1831	2.7732

Metal Prices		
Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	280.75	281.25
Silver (oz's)	4.96	4.98
Platinum (oz's)	361.5	363.5
AL (3 Months)	1360	1364
CU (3 Months)	1663	1667
Zinc (3 Months)	1003	1007
Lead (3 Months)	827	830
Ni (3 Months)	4115	4135

Libor Fixing				
Period	1 - 3	3 - 6	6 - 12	12 - 18
Currency	Month	Months	Months	Months
USD	5.8889	5.9000	5.4141	5.2813
GBP	7.4375	7.4375	7.3086	7.0628
JPY	0.4102	0.4102	0.4492	0.4670
DEM	3.4688	3.4688	3.5313	3.5625
FRF	3.5000	1.5000	1.5328	1.7188
CHF	1.4063	3.5313	3.5703	3.8957
ITL	5.0880	5.0880	4.4750	4.4750

Main Equity Indices						
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low
New York	DOW JONES	7898.66	21.88	0.28	7930.87	7873.77
New York	S&P 500	1020.09	1.22	0.12	1022.01	1018.86
London	FT-SE 100	5065.5	-77.3	-1.51	5162.2	5034.7
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	13983.12	123.98	0.89	14006.1	13887.8
Paris	CAC 40	3486.22	-60.84	-1.7	3509.63	3438.66
Frankfurt	DAX	4898.68	-70.93	-1.52	4789.91	4854.36

Energy		
Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lbs)	103.88	Spot
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1941	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	216	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	101	Spot
Soya (c/lbs)	28.05	Spot
Tea (kg/kg)	125	Spot
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot
Rice (\$/ton)	415	Spot

JOD Cross Rates			
Currency	Buy	Sell	
US Dollar	0.708	0.710	
GB Sterling	1.1888	1.1987	
DE Mark	0.4172	0.4193	
CH Franc	0.8072	0.8097	
FR Franc	0.1244	-0.125	
JP Yen	0.533	0.5357	
NL Guilder	0.37	0.3719	
IT Lira	0.4221	0.4242	

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

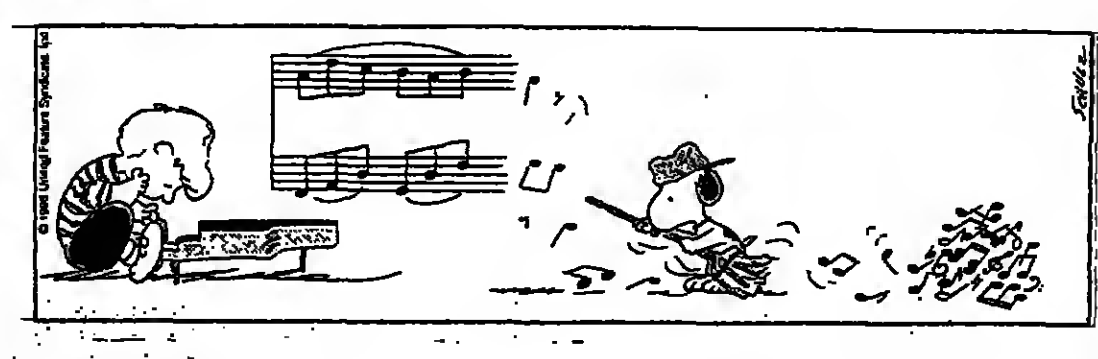
ACROSS

- 1 Brief periods
- 5 Person with a handle?
- 9 Permit
- 14 Applaud
- 15 Spartan queen
- 16 French river
- 17 Taj Mahal site
- 18 Tennis situation, for short
- 19 Puccini opera
- 20 Research rm.
- 21 Five-armed marine animal
- 22 12-step
- 25 Wrath
- 26 Long and Peoples
- 27 Lawbreaker
- 32 Part
- 34 Enticed
- 35 Bullying shout
- 36 Senator from Mississippi
- 37 More adorable
- 38 Undoling
- 39 Literary pieces
- 40 Parcel out
- 41 Land of lamas
- 42 Lycanthrope
- 43 Vend
- 45 Statute
- 46 Declaim wildly
- 49 McMurry novel, with "The"
- 54 That woman
- 55 Set a maximum
- 56 Mob action
- 57 Word in an octagon
- 58 River's river
- 59 Regarding
- 60 Rational
- 61 "The Maltese Falcon" co-star
- 62 Exploit
- 63 Alder or larch

DOWN

- 1 Head skin
- 2 "Pomp and Circumstance" composer
- 3 Low-temperature celestial body
- 4 Health resort
- 5 Bow and arrow
- 6 Derken
- 7 Correct copy
- 8 Declaim wildly
- 9 Changed restrictions
- 10 Remove
- 11 Lean to one side
- 12 Killer whale
- 13 Have on
- 21 Donkey's lament
- 22 Prisoner forever
- 24 Essence
- 27 From within
- 28 Vex
- 29 Celestial binary
- 30 Nobelist Wiesel
- 31 Landlord's due
- 32 Dell side dish
- 33 Top-notch
- 34 Break in the action
- 37 Bozo
- 38 Small brook
- 40 One standing by
- 41 Rip
- 43 Pacific weather phenomenon
- 44 Spoke
- 46 Mail unit
- 47 Glinted
- 48 Conical shelter
- 49 "Born Free" lioness
- 50 Contends
- 51 Give off
- 52 Crisscross framework
- 53 Trig function
- 57 Fast flyer, for short

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n Jeff



THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



JUMBLE.

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

EJYTT

VAROS

YAHNTS

DIOING

Answer: JUMBLE, CLUCK, MOUSE, AVOWAL, SUBDUCE

Yesterday's Jumbles: CLUCK, MOUSE, AVOWAL, SUBDUCE

Answer: Stock in a publishing firm can depend on this — BOOK VALUE

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

ACC may reschedule agricultural loans

** ACCORDING TO sources at the Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC), the lending programme by the end of this year will reach JD22 million of which JD5 million will be seasonal credit directed to sheep breeders/small farmers to finance purchases of fodder. This seasonal funding is in line with similar lending provided by the ACC in 1997 when it extended loans totalling JD5.5 million for this purpose.

Agriculture Minister and ACC Board Chairman Mijhem Khreisha valued the government's additional JD10 million credit facilities to the ACC to enable it expand its lending programmes for this year. He indicated that most of the credit will benefit the category of small farmers and the unemployed to help them set up productive and income-generating projects that would help raise the living standard of rural families. This objective will

transform the rural families into productive communities and will help limit the problems of poverty and unemployment.

Khreisha announced that there are plans to study the possibility of rescheduling outstanding loans on debtors to the ACC, especially those who faced troubles or who saw their projects damaged for various reasons which would make those borrowers unable to settle their dues on schedule.

ACC Director General Nimer Nabulsi said high-level meetings were held recently and all issues related to troubled loans were discussed. He indicated that necessary remedial measures were reviewed in order to submit a detailed report about the issue to the ACC's board of directors which would take the appropriate decision in this regard. He emphasised that the board will work out all problems facing small farmers (Al Ra'i).

Royal Decree expected this week to merge ministry of supply with industry, trade

** IT IS expected that a Royal Decree would be issued this week endorsing a decision to merge the ministry of industry and trade and the ministry of supply into one ministry, such a step would require that Mohammad Saleh Horani submit his resignation from the post of minister of supply and the cancellation of the post of secretary general handling supply affairs.

Mohammad Halaiah, secretary general of the Ministry of Industry and Trade said a re-evaluation of the situation at the Ministry of Supply would take place in the light of the merger process and the actual need for staff. "If

there is a need, a review of the manning table will be conducted," he indicated. Halaiah explained that in case of surplus, excess staff will be transferred to other ministries and departments.

He emphasised that most departments at the Ministry of Supply will remain active as most of the articles of the Ministry of Supply law remained in the new law, especially those related to control and consumption. Halaiah said the merger of the two ministries necessitates drawing a new organisational structure for the ministry as new responsibilities will have to be taken into consideration (Al Aswaq).

Iraq reopens trade centre in Syria

BAGHDAD (AFP) — An Iraqi delegation arrived in Damascus Saturday to reopen their trade centre that was closed 18 years ago, the official INA news agency said.

Syria reopened its trade centre in Baghdad on Sept. 3, also after an 18 year closure, in a sign that relations between the two countries are thawing.

Last month, Iraq and Syria signed a memorandum of understanding to restore an oil pipeline between northern Iraq and Syria's Mediterranean port of Banyas.

Baghdad and Damascus have also agreed to build a new refinery with a capacity of 140,000 barrels per day at the Banyas terminal, using Iraqi and Syrian capital.

Syria and Iraq, both ruled by rival branches of the pan-Arab Baath Party, began to normalise relations in 1997 after ties were cut in 1980 because of Syria's support for Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war.

Their border was re-opened for trade and official visits in 1997 and Syrian goods, from soap to food, have flooded into Iraq since then. Trade between Syria and Iraq reached \$150 million in 1997, INA said.

Court rejects resignation of caretaker trying to salvage troubled company

By Mohammad Ben Hussela

AMMAN — The Court of First Instance Saturday rejected the resignation of the caretaker of the Jordan Tobacco and Cigarette Company appointed last month to manage the debt-ridden corporation.

Hatim Shahin was appointed by the Court of First Instance in August to manage the financially troubled company after a lawsuit was filed against it by the Arab Bank for defaulting on paying a JD5.5 million debt.

"I submitted my resignation because I can not work in the presence of the oew board of directors," said Shahin, an independent lawyer. "The new board contradicts the aim of my mission," he said.

Shahin criticised the ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply for appointing the new board as he had already been appointed by the court to do what the new board is expected to do.

"It is redundant to have both of us doing the same thing," he emphasised.

Earlier this month, the ministry appointed a new board of directors for the company comprising representatives from the private and public sectors. The board will look at all options to save the troubled company including the options of liquidation or capitalising the debts.

According to Shahin, the company's employees did not receive their salaries for August. He said if the situation remains unchanged, the company will not be able to pay its employees.

The new board of directors is headed by a representative of the Arab Bank, (the tobacco company's major creditor) and includes representatives from the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Supply, ANZ Grindleys Bank, Industrial Development Bank, the Social Security Corporation and the Ministry of Finance.

According to company records, the Jordan Tobacco and Cigarettes lost JD2.5 million in 1996. The ratio of total liability to shareholders equity increased from 67.20 per cent to 78.53 per cent. Its current liability stands at JD22 million.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SINGLES

TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179

ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 19/09/1998

PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	QIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
355.500	170.000	ARAB BANK	18.1	.90	49	1230	211268	223.00	221.00	2.00-
2.000	1.020	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.4	4.24	7	15050	24833	1.65	1.65	-
3.300	1.010	ARAB OF JORDAN	6	0.00	3	9800	9996	1.02	1.02	-
1.300	.870	NIO. EAST INV. BK.	62.4	0.00	5	35000	33250	.95	.95	-
2.680	1.550	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	11.1	6.52	4	5000	7950	1.59	1.59	-
6.510	2.610	THE HOUSING BK.	18.0	3.52	64	35844	102610	2.95	2.84	.11-
3.450	1.740	JOR. KUMAR BANK	9	0.00	9	2069	3679	1.78	1.78	-
.870	.580	JOR. GULF BANK	9	0.00	1	1000	570	.58	.57	.01-
4.190	1.920	ARAB JOR. INV. BK.	41.1	2.48	4	35050	70801	2.02	2.02	-
3.910	1.690	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	17.4	0.00	15	17050	19376	1.74	1.70	.04-
3.900	1.350	JOR. INV. FID. BANK	22.8	3.38	7	10450	15466	1.48	1.48	-
.970	.740	SEIT. AL-HAL. (SEITNA)	3.6	0.00	6	1200	949	.74	.73	.01-
.850	.600	PHILADEL. INV. BK.	9	0.00	27	87579	60453	.70	.69	.01-
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 286.77 CHNG: -1.18 201 256422 631200										
2.240	1.470	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	9.5	5.61	31	11118	16377	1.49	1.47	.02-
4.030	1.650	JOR. ELECTRICITY	11.3	5.46	1	100	183	1.93	1.83	.10-
7.460	1.950	VEHICLES OWNERS FED.	8.0	6.15	2	257	696	1.95	1.95	-
5.200	3.550	ARAB INTL. HOTELS	18.5	3.33	2	5400	24240	4.35	4.50	.15+
1.380	.740	NATL. PORTFOLIO	10.3	0.00	8	2453	1864	.77	.76	.01-
1.120	.680	REAL ESTATE INV.	13.5	0.00	2	200	139	.69	.69	-
.590	.280	JORDAN REALTY TRAD.	9	0.00	5	1950	446	.28	.28	-
1.680	1.060	JOR. INVEST. CO.	17.7	0.00	5	6884	7512	1.09	1.09	-
4.600	1.880	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	9.7	2.05	13	8725	17033	1.96	1.95	.01-
1.050	.890	TARSA EDUCATION	20.5	0.00	4	2100	1869	.89	.89	-
1.830	1.260	UNIFIED CO.	5.0	9.82	9	1800	2243	1.16	1.12	.03-
.810	.540	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	1	200	102	.54	.51	.03-
1.350	.950	UNION FOR FINAN. INV.	1.4	5.90	2	2500	2725	1.11	1.09	.02-
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 106.22 CHNG: +0.48 86 43917 75539										
3.900	1.840	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	11.4	5.73	11	4298	8276	1.94	1.92	.02-
4.110	1.570	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	15.9	0.00	3	1750	2645	1.57	1.50	.07-
6.500	3.950	ARAB POTASH CO.	19.4	5.06	15	48184	19082	3.95	3.95	-
13.250	10.050	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.2	8.43	10	850	8969	10.53	10.55	.02+
7.350	5.500	JOR. MORTED MILLS	7.6	3.45	1	500	2900	6.05	5.80	.250
5.740	2.400	ARAB PHARM. WARE.	7.5	2.76	25	9526	25962	4.75	4.75	-
5.590	1.700	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	4.0	0.00	8	2453	513	1.15	1.14	.01-
6.350	4.700	QAR ALDANA DV. INV.	6.6	6.36	13	9100	50064	5.58	5.50	.08+
2.980	1.700	ARAB ALUM. IND.	12.9	14.29	1	50	88	1.72	1.75	.03+
3.720	2.880	LIVERPOOL & ROBERTY	13.5	0.00	6	3200	1280	2.88	2.88	-
.800	.390	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	9	0.00	12	200	78	.41	.39	.02-
.890	.300	INTERMED. PETRO. CHCM.	9	0.00	1	6600	2112	.53	.53	-
.690	.370	JOR. ROCKETED IND.	9	0.00	1	100	35	.37	.35	.02-
2.760	.760	UNIV. CERN. INOS.	9.9	8.25	13	2250	2165	.92	.97	.05+
2.300	.700	NATL. CABLE WIRE. MPAC	34.2	0.00	2	350	256	.72	.73	.01+
.730	.380	JOR. SILICON CERN	7.8	0.00	7	1300	1354	.41	.41	-
.700	.390	FAMFA INVEST.	9	0.00	2	1000	460	.47	.46	.01-
1.270	.530	UNIV. MODN. INOS.	11.0	8.70	87	85450	59325	.70	.69	.01-
.920	.500	JOR. INOS. RESOURCES	9	0.00	12	650	335	.52	.51	.01-
1.600	1.200	NATL. CHLORIDE	8.7	8.06	1	1000	2440	1.26	1.24	.02+
1.080	.600	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	8.9	15.87	12	7550	4757	.64	.63	.01-
1.550	1.150	EL. RAY REPAIR WEAR	42.2	0.00	4	6000	7200	1.20	1.20	-
1.310	.910	INTL. ROBBAN	7.5	5.45	73	47866	50948	1.05	1.05	-
.880	.400	JORDAN STEEL	9.5	8.24	4	8600	7310	.85	.85	-
.730	.580	NAT. ALUMINUM	33.7	0.00	12	7550	5147	.69	.68	.01-
.670	.530	NIO. EAST COMPLEX	10.0	0.00	3	1050	578	.55	.55	-
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 79.08 CHNG: -0.71 326 258604 437754										
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 173.94 CHNG: -0.97 613 558943 1144493										
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 19/09/1998										
1.050	.860	EXPORT & FIN. INV. 751	15.9	0.00	10	24696	15063	.86	.86	-
1.000	.900	JOR. INT. INSURANCE CO	0	0.00	1	100	85	.90	.85	.05-
.950	.950	ARAB INSURANCE	0	0.00	1	250	225	.95	.90	.05-
.490	.270	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	0	0.00	2	200	58	.31	.29	.02-
.300	.340	JOR. TRADING PAC.	0	0.00	2	3300	324	.39	.38	.01-
.800	.500	ORION INV.	0	0.00	4	1700	918	.54	.54	-
.780	.560	AL-OMLIVYAT	34.5	0.00	2	10000	5900	.59	.59	-
1.000	.810	ARAB JOR. INVEST. CO.	15.3	5.56	1	500	450	.86	.86	-
.750	.090	JOR. INDUS. HOTEL-JENDO	0	0.00	1	4000	600	.14	.15	.01+
.430	.230	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	28.8	0.00	8	6100	1525	.25	.25	-
.400	.230	NATL. TEXTILE	0	0.00	4	6250	1565	.25	.26	.01+
.580	.260	NATL. MULT. IND. HANTCO	9	0.00	31	86546	24213	.29	.28	.01-
.690	.570	HOUSING PHARM. 902	0	0.00	4	178	84	.58	.57	.01-
2.100	1.160	UNION TOBACCO 87.5	13.8	5.79	11	3900	7905	2.10	2.16	.06+
.720	.570	RASI PHARM.	0	0.00	3	4000	840	.21	.21	-
.700	.350	INDOS. CERAMIC	9.2	0.00	3	900	315	.35	.35	-
.340	.160	J. TEXTILE HANTCO	0	0.00	2	8200	1304	.17	.17	-
.950	.540	ADVANCED PHARM. IND.	9	0.00	2	936	514	.55	.55	-
.500	.310	PERAL SAN. P. CONV.	0	0.00	4	782	242	.31	.31	-
.660	.430	NATL. POULTRY	9	0.00	24	240000	122400	.90	.91	.01+
1.000	.690	AL-KERAN PRIVATEING CO	11.0	10.52	5	2400	1705	.70	.72	.02+
GRAND TOTAL 126 410338 189511										

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You're a passionate, exuberant person, with a tendency towards wild music and abstract paintings. If you haven't already tried any of those art forms, this is a marvelous day to begin. You need to be uninhibited to be creative, of course, but you also need a structure. Those are your assignments for today.

Taurus: (April 20 to May 20) A wonderful feeling continues, and this new moon sets the scene for a longer phase. You're lucky; whatever happens next — which looks like it's going to be work. That's the other theme coming up in the next few weeks. You'll be working hard, but loving every minute of it, starting now.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) There are still things to do around your place, and it looks like you're a little nervous about them. There's no need to be apologetic. People accept you just the way you are, and the same goes for your living environment. Besides, they probably don't even notice whatever you think is wrong. They think the place is perfect.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) You're probably throw the best barbecue in the neighbourhood, or something else about your place makes it warm and friendly. Everybody who comes over feels like family. Today, most of them may be family, although the neighbours are peering over the fence, wanting to be invited. Make it a pooduck and everyone can play.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) The moon's in Libra and the sun will be there soon. You'll see the focus changing from finances to education. It's as if you finally got your act together. But now, what happens? What are you going to do for your next big surprise? You'll have to learn something new, and you might as well start thinking about that now.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Looks like that check in the mail is finally going to arrive, and it's about time. You're careful with your own money and everyone else's, but today you're allowed to be flamboyant. Don't worry. You won't do anything you can't afford. That's just one of the nice things about being a Virgo.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) The sun's in Virgo and the moon's in Libra. This is awesome. Even better, the sun's going into your sign within the next couple days, so this is just the tip of the iceberg. You're getting stronger and more powerful. You're advancing to the next level, and you're about to have a really good time while you're at it. Start now.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) The moon's in Libra and the sun will be there soon. Libra is in your twelfth house of hopes, fears, dreams and private conversations. So you'll be having more of those over the next month. You're also pushed to take care of old business, in preparation for starting new projects. Think about that today as you plan your agenda.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You could be worried you won't be able to accomplish something important. Fear not. Your chances of achieving your goals are good today, especially if you put in a nagging correction. You haven't goofed up yet, and you probably won't. Just sail right on to victory, then celebrate with friends.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You're learning a great deal, but it's so interesting, and you're having so much fun, you might not be aware of it. There could be a test coming up, however. An authority figure will quiz you on what you've accomplished so far. So take a few minutes to remember the details.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) The moon's in Libra and the sun's going there pretty soon. Libra is in your solar ninth house of travel and higher education. Those are areas you can really get enthusiastic about. Today, you may get to test out your wings. Try something a little bit more daring than you've ever done before.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) With all the Virgo influences going on right now, attention to detail is important. The problem is, you've had it with detail. You want to get into form and colour and music and dance. You want to be uninhibited for a change, and you should go ahead and do that. You don't want to snap and break something!

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli

Commonwealth Games

Double sprint surprise as ailing favourites slump; Komen takes gold

Mutola hands Mozambique first ever medal

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Nova Peris-Kneebone and Julien Golden produced sensational sprint victories at the Commonwealth Games on Saturday as the ailing favourites slumped.

Kenya dominated the long distance races with Daniel Komen leading a 1-2-3 in the men's 5,000 metres and Japheth Kimutai taking the 800m title.

Peris-Kneebone, a training partner of men's 100m champion Ato Bolden, lost a court battle to get in the Australian Games team but was reprieved after 200m defending champion Cathy Freeman was injured.

The lanky 27-year-old had the last laugh over the selectors by winning the final in 22.77sec. Juliet Campbell of Jamaica won silver and Lauren Hewitt of Australia the bronze.

"This is really bizarre, from opportunity comes success," said Peris-Kneebone. "All I could think about when I crossed the line was the hard work I put in."

England's Golding led a

British clean sweep of the

men's 200m final but Scotland's European Champion Dougie Walker came in last, suffering from a throat virus and recent knee surgery.

Golding ran a personal best time of 20.18sec and bemoaned the absence of 200m world champion Bolden and Namibia's former world champion Frankie Fredericks who went on to a lucrative Grand Prix meeting in Tokyo.

"Maybe if they had been here I would still have beaten them," said the 23-year-old.

"My time will come to run against the big boys. I came here to run a PB and you can't ask for more than that."

Golding led from the start and showed real class when Wales' silver medal winner Christian Malcolm came back at him with 40 metres to go, stepping up another gear to win by a convincing margin.

English veteran John Regis took the bronze. The Kenyans outwitted

the South Africans in the men's 800m with Japheth

Kimutai winning after teammate Kennedy Ngetich set the stage with a suicidal early pace.

The 19-year-old Kimutai, who ended Wilson Kipketer's three year unbeaten run in August, won in a time of 1:43.82 from South African duo Hezekiel Sepeng and Johan Botha.

Komen ran away with the men's 5,000m gold in 13:22.57 with fellow Kenyans Thomas Nyariki getting the silver 22.57 seconds behind and 18-year-old Richard Limo the bronze.

Maria Mutola and her distant cousin Argentina Paulino came first and second in the women's 800 metres to hand Mozambique their first ever Commonwealth Games medal.

England's Diane Modahl, who had hoped to regain the title she won in 1990 and was not allowed to defend in 1994 because of drug accusations, took the bronze medal.

Relgning world indoor champion Mutola seized the

lead after 200 metres and was never in trouble as she clocked a Commonwealth record 1min 57.60sec.

Dinsdale Morgan of Jamaica won the men's 400m hurdle, while at the start of the day, Australia's Jane Saville ended compatriot Kerry Saxby-Junna's hopes of a third consecutive Commonwealth 10km walk title.

The 23-year-old Australian national champion won in a time of 43min 59 sec ahead of 37-year-old Saxby-Junna.

Off the athletics track, the 16th Games, which has drawn 4,500 athletes from 70 nations, was hit by its first drug controversy.

Pakistani marksman Rustam Khan was ordered to return to Kuala Lumpur from the shooting contest in Langkawi island for the second sample test said sources.

Khan was eighth in the men's pairs centre rifle contest and left after coming fifth in the individual centre rifle on Saturday.

Jaspal Rana won the men's individual centre fire

pistol final for India after a shootout with South Africa's Allan McDonald for gold.

Susan McCready of Australia took the women's individual sport rifle title.

In the cricket final, South Africa beat favourites Australia by four wickets. Australia were bowled out for just 183 despite a hard hitting unbeaten 90 by skipper Steve Waugh.

A 73-run opening stand by Andrew Hudson and Mike Rindel put South Africa on course for victory which was achieved with four overs to spare.

Hungarian-born Akos Sandor won a triple gold for Canada in the weightlifting under 105kg. The world junior champion lifted a total of 360kg.

New Zealand super-heavyweight Darren Liddel capitalised on the absence of Australia's defending champion Stefan Botev to lift all three golds in the over 105kg class. His total of 367.5kg was a Commonwealth record.



Michelle Cameron of South Africa competes in Women's Rhythmic Gymnastics at the 16th Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur (AP Photo)

Ten years after Seoul, Ben Johnson dreams of comeback

TORONTO (AP) — Even after 10 years, he still would have held the title of fastest man in the world.

And now Ben Johnson is trying to reclaim what he says he never should have lost. The muscle-bound blur hustled for using steroids at the Seoul Olympics is ready to return to the track at age 36.

"It kind of feels sad to think how fast I could have gone," he said.

He did go fast, anyway, amazingly fast, blowing past Carl Lewis in the 100 metres for a gold medal and world record of 9.79 at the 1988 Games. Stripped of the medal and the record, he was suspended for two years, and banned for life in 1993 when he again tested positive for steroids.

His second comeback bid rests on a legal battle to overturn that ban by the International Amateur Athletics Federation. He is to appear in Ontario Court on Monday.

Based on assessments from his agent and lawyers, Johnson is optimistic about the outcome, and talks of returning to world-class competition by December or January, perhaps at meets in Australia or South Africa.

He has been training regularly throughout his long exile from track, and estimates he'd need eight weeks of intense work to reach peak form. He says he recently ran 80 metres in 8.14, and believes he could start his comeback with a 100-meter time of around 10.10.

"My dream is to come back again and compete against the best in the world," he said.

Since his lifetime ban he's dabbled in real estate and made several public appearances to raise cash and draw attention to his case. He's traveled to Europe and Japan several times, where the media remain fascinated by him, and last year resorted to such antics as racing against a Toronto radio sportscaster.

Johnson's agent and manager, Morris Chrochotek, is engaged in a two-pronged offensive to get his client back on the track.

He's collecting documents that he says cast doubt on the 1993 drug test, while focusing the court case on the issue of restraint of trade.

"Let's say Ben was driving, and maybe he was speeding," Chrochotek said. "Okay, you take his license away — but not for the rest of his life. Enough is enough."

Johnson's campaign has received little support from anyone at the higher levels of Canadian track and field, whether officials or athletes.

But there seems to be a shift in Canadian media coverage of him, treating him less like a villain and more like someone who became a scapegoat for a widespread problem.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corp. aired a lengthy TV documentary this month that raised the question of whether Johnson was treated fairly. Among those interviewed was Mark McKoy, who came back to win a gold medal at the Barcelona Olympics in 1992 after a two-year

suspension.

"I've always thought Ben was shafted," McKoy said. "You get caught, you do your time, you come back."

Johnson's quest is followed with interest at the Canadian Center for Ethics in Sport, which helps administer drug testing on behalf of Canada's sports federations.

The center's chief executive, Victor Lachance, said Johnson is entitled to his day in court, but suggested the sprinter might have been better off persevering with an appeal to the IAAF.

Lachance said the spate of drug scandals in sports this year underscores the scope of the problem, but disputed the notion that this should generate sympathy for Johnson.

"There is no question there is doping going on, and no question more needs to be done to ensure we have a level playing field," Lachance said. "But the fact that other people were not caught doesn't mean anything unjust was done to Mr. Johnson."

Canadian sports officials are growing weary of Johnson's long-running reinstatement campaign and believe the lifetime ban was proper, said Hugh Wilson, director of athlete and coach development for Athletics Canada, the national governing body of the sport.

"People want Ben Johnson to have a good life and make the most of the gifts that he has, but not here in track and field," he said.

Johnson isn't alone in his exile. His former coach, Charlie Francis, remains banned from coaching for life, although he appears regularly at major Canadian meets and is sought for technical advice.

Jamie Astaphan, the doctor who admitted administering illegal drugs to Johnson, moved back to his native St. Kitts in the Caribbean. He and Johnson contend that the positive drug test in Seoul resulted from American resentment that Johnson was outrunning Lewis. Johnson, however, also has admitted that he took steroids.

"I beat the Americans — that was the problem," he said.

"If I was American, this never would have happened."

His bitterness extends to Canada and the United States, and he plans to move abroad, perhaps to Italy, once his reinstatement case is resolved. Europeans, he said, have been more supportive than North Americans, and he never wants to race again for Canada.

De la Hoya keeps WBC welterweight title

LAS VEGAS (AFP) — Oscar de la Hoya kept his World Boxing Council welterweight crown here Friday as Mexican legend Julio Cesar Chavez failed to answer the bell for the ninth round.

The eight-round victory was even more decisive than the outright knockout of de la Hoya had hoped for.

"That's the worst thing that could ever happen to a fighter," he said of Chavez' failure to answer the bell. "That's why it was even more satisfying that he gave up instead of me getting a knockout."

De la Hoya had ended the eighth with a fierce flurry — a left uppercut to the chin, a right and another left.

The snarling champion, sensing victory, had to be directed back to his corner after the bell.

Chavez, one eye swollen and his mouth bleeding from a cut on the inside of his lip, sat hunched over on his stool.

When de la Hoya realised Chavez was done, he leapt into the air with undisguised joy.

Chavez insisted that it was his cornermen who made him quit, because of the severity of the cut in his mouth.

"I did not quit," said Chavez, who lost for only the third time in 106 fights. "I'm a man. The corner stopped

the fight. "I wanted to keep fighting, but my corner wouldn't let me," he added. "I don't believe that at all," de la Hoya said. "He did (quit). He said he did. He told me he did."

Chavez had a different version of their brief conversation in the ring. "He approached me and he said it was a great fight," Chavez said, "and that he respected me. And I answered 'me too.'"

De la Hoya, 25, remained unbeaten with 29 victories, 24 of them inside the distance.

His second victory over the 36-year-old Mexican was especially sweet. Chavez had claimed that De la Hoya would never have stopped him in the fourth round of their 1996 super lightweight title bout if Chavez hadn't suffered a pre-fight cut.

Those remarks rankled de la Hoya, who vowed to look for a knockout to earn Chavez' respect.

Perhaps that was why he allowed the veteran to lure him into several brutal inside exchanges, forsaking his usual style and the left jab that had stood him in such good stead in their first fight.

"A couple of rounds I got in his game plan, we were just slugging it out," de la Hoya said. "I got caught up

in the whole event.

"I did the total opposite of what we worked on," de la Hoya admitted. "I was too tense. But I got what I wanted."

Chavez became more aggressive as the fight wore on, but De la Hoya was leading on all three judges' cards when the fight was stopped.

John Keane and Daniel Van De Wiele both scored the fight 78-75 for de la Hoya. Anek Hongtongkam scored it 79-73 for the champion.

"I want to tell everyone that I give all my respect to Oscar de la Hoya as a great boxer and person," Chavez said. "But he couldn't resist a little criticism."

"He's a hard puncher, but not a knockout artist," Chavez said. "He didn't knock me out. He never knocked me down."

And Chavez said he wasn't through. He plans to fight International Boxing Federation junior welterweight champion Vince Phillips in December.

"After that, I will retire," he said. De la Hoya plans to fight Ghana's unbeaten Ike Quarrey in November, a first step toward silencing critics who accuse him of avoiding the best fighters in the welterweight division.

"That's going to be a hell of a fight," de la Hoya said.

Guivarc'h considers future at Newcastle

LONDON (AFP) — France's World Cup striker Stephane Guivarc'h dropped a strong hint Saturday that he was ready to leave Newcastle just two months after moving to the English Premiership club.

Guivarc'h was signed by former Newcastle boss Kenny Dalglish for £3.5 million (around \$5.25 million) from Auxerre to play alongside Alan Shearer despite failing to score in the World Cup.

But with Ruud Gullit now in charge and Shearer confirming his intention to stay put the Frenchman — top goal scorer in the French League in consecutive seasons — is prepared to leave St James' Park in his bid to play first-team football.

He said: "I want to play for Newcastle but I think I may have to change clubs."

"I respect Ruud Gullit and in the end it is his choice. Alan Shearer is number one here and I would like to be number two, but it wasn't good for me when Kenny Dalglish left."

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Souness handed one-month ban

LISBON (AFP) — Benfica coach Graeme Souness was Friday given a one-month ban from the touchline by the Portuguese League disciplinary committee. The former Scottish international midfielder was also fined 500,000 escudos (around \$2,900) following incidents during a match against champions Porto at the end of last season. Benfica won the match 3-0 but Souness was involved in a number of heated arguments with Porto players, particularly Brazilian striker Mario Jardel.

Goellner stuns Berasategui

BOURNEMOUTH (AFP) — Unseeded German Marc Goellner stunned top-seeded Spaniard Alberto Berasategui 6-4, 6-3 in under an hour Friday to advance to the semi-finals of the Samsung Open ATP Tour clay court event here. London-based Goellner, ranked 103 in the world, beat the Spaniard for the first time. Second-seeded Spaniard Albert Costa, the second seed, overcame Frenchman Arnaud Clement in a titanic three-setter 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7/2) after the Frenchman had led 6-5 in the final set with a break. Costa now meets Italian Vincenzo

Santopadre in the semis, while Goellner faces defending champion Felix Mantilla of Spain. Santopadre beat Alex Lopez Moron of Spain 6-3, 6-3, while Mantilla downed Austrian Stefan Koubek 6-7 (6/8), 6-4, 6-4.

Noah, McEnroe advance

PARIS (AP) — John McEnroe narrowly defeated Henri Leconte on the second day of play Friday in the Compaq Senior tournament, while two other French players won their matches and could reach the final. Argentina's Guillermo Vilas, 46, the oldest player in the tournament, was defeated by Yannick Noah of France, 6-2, 6-7(5), 10-2, winning the final set in a Champions Tiebreak. On Thursday, Vilas had beaten Bjorn Borg who fell victim Friday to fellow Swede Mikael Pernfors 3-6, 6-2, 10-8 in the round robin event. McEnroe defeated Leconte 3-6, 7-6(4), 10-6, while Guy Forget of France beat Mansour Bahrami of Iran 6-3, 7-6(4). The Compaq Senior is the fourth stop on the Delta Airlines ATP Senior Tour of Champions. The event is taking place at the Roland Garros stadium.

TODAY AT	<div>CINEMA TEL: 563414</div> <div>PHILADELPHIA '1'</div> <div>Sophie Marceau ... in Leo Tolstoy's</div> <div>ANNA KARENINA</div> <div>Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30</div>	<div>CINEMA TEL: 563414</div> <div>PHILADELPHIA '2'</div> <div>NASSER</div> <div>Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30</div>	<div>CINEMA TEL: 5699238</div> <div>PLAZA</div> <div>Comedian Adel Imam .. in AL ZA'EEM</div> <div>Shows: 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30</div>	<div>CINEMA TEL: 5677420</div> <div>CONCORD</div> <div>CONCORD '1' NASSER</div> <div>Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30</div> <div>CONCORD '2' UP CLOSE & PERSONAL</div> <div>Shows: 3:30, 5:30 only</div>	<div>CINEMA TEL: 5934793</div> <div>GALLERIA 1</div> <div>ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria</div> <div>ARMAGEDDON</div> <div>Shows: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:45</div>	<div>CINEMA TEL: 5934793</div> <div>GALLERIA 2</div> <div>ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria</div> <div>GREAT EXPECTATIONS</div> <div>Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45</div>	<div>Hibon Yarn Theatre TEL: 4625155</div> <div>WATCH OUT FOR THE NEW PLAY TERRORISM</div>
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Jackson Colin of Britain clears a hurdle on his way to win the 110-metre hurdles in the TOTO International Super Track And Field Meet in Tokyo (AP photo)

Jackson just happy missing Commonwealth Games

TOKYO (AFP) — Britain's 110-metre hurdle world record holder Colin Jackson had no regrets missing the Commonwealth Games as he beat world and Olympic champion Allen Johnson in his last race of the season here Saturday.

"I feel like I've had enough Commonwealth Games now. I've won one silver and two golds," the 31-year-old said after winning his favourite race at the annual Tokyo International Athletics Meeting.

"I guess it's for someone else this time," he said.

The cash-laden non-Grand Prix Tokyo event represented the season's finale for many athletes while the Commonwealth Games were under way in Malaysia.

Jackson, who has clinched his third straight European title this year, said he

skipped a trip to Kuala Lumpur because he had already gone through the European Cup, the European championships and the World Cup in a season.

"It's hard to lift my performance level high for another championship," Jackson said, adding his victory here, despite its slow time, was good enough to "get myself ready for the world championships next year."

He said it had been the "best season" since he set the world record of 12.91sec at the 1993 world championships in Stuttgart.

Jackson won here in a mediocre time of 13.51 while his American arch-rival Johnson, the two-time Olympic gold medalist, finished just 0.07 behind.

Connors-Graf set new 'Battle of the Sexes'

HOUSTON (AFP) — Two days before the 25th anniversary of the tennis "Battle of the Sexes" between Bobby Riggs and Billie Jean King, promoters have arranged for a 1990s version of the match.

Destiny Productions plans a December 12 match between Jimmy Connors and Steffi Graf in a modern-day version of the Riggs-King showdown, won by King 6-4, 6-3, 6-3, here at the Astrodome before 30,472 spectators.

The triumph was seen as a victory for women's equality in sport and beyond, with more than 40 million television viewers watching.

"This match really pushed people's buttons," King said. "Bobby kept talking about tennis and I said, 'Bobby, it's not even about tennis. It's about people's emotions and their philosophies and their roles in life.'"

"So much was going on to make women feel things were changing in the world. But in their own lives, not much had changed. There was a disconnect there. That's what made this match huge."

"Bobby didn't understand the social significance at the beginning. He caught up to it at the end. He got it."

Carnival sideshow promotion techniques of Riggs, who died of prostate cancer three years ago at age 77, helped attract attention.

In 1971, King became the first woman to win \$100,000 in a year while Riggs made paltry sums on a senior circuit. Riggs issued the challenge and King turned him down.

So Riggs instead asked Australia's top-ranked Margaret Court and beat her 6-2, 6-1, in a Mother's Day exhibition.

"Once Bobby beat Margaret, I knew it meant two things," King said. "It meant I would have to play him. And it meant I would have to win."

King, then 29, turns 55 in November, the same age Riggs was when they met on the court. King was able to keep Riggs running and use her age edge to best advantage to win.

When they meet in December, Graf will be 29, 17 years younger than Connors, who turned 46 on September 2.

Swiss pair face tough task in Fed Cup final

GENEVA (AFP) — Switzerland face a tough task when they host Spain in the Fed Cup final, which begins here on Saturday, looking for their first title.

The Swiss combination of world number one Martina Hingis and Patty Schnyder meet the Spanish team of Arantxa Sanchez Vicario and Conchita Martinez with both teams likely to use only two players over the two-day, best-of-five decider.

Hingis is troubled by her recent form and was beaten by American Lindsay Davenport in the final of the U.S. Open earlier this month. She has, nonetheless, beaten Sanchez Vicario and Martinez the last 11 times she has played them over the past two years.

Fast-improving Schnyder, who has risen to ninth in the rankings, also holds two wins over Sanchez Vicario, whom she faces in the opening singles.

Former Wimbledon champion Martinez then meets Hingis in the second of the opening day singles.

The Spaniards will be looking to call on their vast experience to give them the



Swiss player Patty Schnyder in the first Fed Cup Final match against Spanish Arantxa Sanchez in Geneva (AP photo)

edge against the younger semis.

The Spaniards have reached the final on eight occasions and No. 4-ranked Sanchez Vicario and seventh-ranked Martinez have played in all those finals.

Jordan's soccer team leaves for 7th Arab Cup finals

By Aileen Bannayan

AMMAN — The Kingdom's national soccer team left for Doha, Qatar Saturday to take part in the Sept. 22-Oct. 1 Arab Cup finals in which 12 teams will be competing.

The Jordanian team just wrapped up a training camp in Egypt where they won one match, drew in two and lost another two. They previously had two training camps in Aqaba and Yugoslavia.

Jordan has taken part in all past six Arab Cups since the championship first kicked off in 1962. The Kingdom achieved the best result in the 5th Cup hosted in Amman where Jordan took fourth place.

The Kingdom's team has played a total of 21 Arab Cup matches winning only three, drawing in three and losing 15 matches.

A further look at the archives shows Jordan scoring only 13 goals while allowing 51 in.

Iraq are the four time titleholders. Tunisia and Egypt have won it once each, while Syria are three time runners-up.

Jordan opens its Group 1 matches against Libya Sept. 24 and will next play hosts Qatar Sept. 26.

Egypt, Kuwait and Syria are playing in Group 2; Morocco, the UAE and Sudan are in Group 3, while Group 4 includes Saudi Arabia,

Year	Host	Winner	Runner-Up	Countries	Jordan's rank
1962	Lebanon	Tunisia	Syria	5	5th
1964	Kuwait	Iraq	Kuwait	5	5th
1966	Iraq	Iraq	Syria	10	eliminated - 1st round
1985	Saudi Arabia	Iraq	Bahrain	6	eliminated - 1st round
1988	Jordan	Iraq	Syria	10	4th
1992	Syria	Egypt	Saudi Arabia	6	6th

Algeria and Lebanon.

The top team in each group will qualify to the second round where the winners advance to the finals and the losers play for third and fourth places.

Jordan qualified to the Arab Cup finals after beating Lebanon 2-0, drawing 1-1 with Palestine, and losing to Syria 3-0 in the preliminaries held in Beirut, Lebanon.

Premier League matches have meanwhile been put on hold pending the return of the national team with two more weeks remaining for the conclusion of the first leg.

Al Faisali currently top the standings on goal difference after Al Wihdat lost their first match 3-0 to Al Hussein.

Al Wihdat have won the Cup and Cup Winners Cup in the last two years and the Premier League in the last four and are this year looking

for their 5th consecutive Premier League title. They won the first of the season's titles when they clinched their fourth Cup Winners' Cup.

Al Faisali won the second of the season's four soccer championships when they won their record 10th Jordan Cup.

The fourth trophy of the year — the Jordan Football Association (JFA) Shield — is currently underway with team lineups missing their national team players.

The Premier League Championship had kicked off in April but has witnessed a series of delays starting with the month-long boycott of seven teams over the issue of ticket sales allocation before the JFA settled the dispute.

The championship then resumed only to halt again in June during which the national team prepared

for the Arab Cup qualifiers. It then resumed Aug. 9 before its current halt for the Arab Cup finals.

The national team includes Ahmad Abu Nasouh, Mohammad Abu Daoud, Freidon Shamsudin, Abdallah Abu Zame'h, Amjad Taher, Faisal Ibrahim, Hatem Aqel, Haitham Shbout, Haitham Samrin, Mohannad Mahadin, Osama Tatal, Subhi Suleiman, Sufyan Abdullah, Ali Juma'a, Laith Dardour, Farid Shananeh, Hassouneh Shiekh, Ihab Ma'ali, Abdullah Shiyab, Ra'fat Ali, Badran Shaqran, and Mazen Anbar.

Three key players are missing from the lineup: Jiryes Tadros (injury), Jamal Abu Abed (retired), and Youssef Ammouri who was not named to the team.

Tyson faces tough fight from Nevada panel

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Nearly broke and with his future in the ring at stake, Mike Tyson will plead for his license before the same panel that tossed him out of boxing.

The man who once terrorized the heavyweight ranks will seek reinstatement Saturday from the Nevada commissioners who stripped him of his license for biting Evander Holyfield's ears.

Tyson's adviser says the former heavyweight champion may be forced to fight outside the country if he doesn't get a license.

"I have loads of offers and I've turned them all down so far," adviser Shelly Finkel said. "I don't know what I'm going to do if he isn't licensed, though. His financial situation is very bad and he needs to fight."

Tyson earned more than \$100 million in the ring in the two years before his last bout with Holyfield in 1997.

Approval means Tyson could fight again before the end of the year. Rejection would mean another year on the sidelines — at least in Nevada and the states that honor his suspension — and threaten a career that was fading even before he snapped in the ring and bit Holyfield in their title fight.

"Mike Tyson will have to rise to the occasion during his licensing because it's going to be a test of what kind of person he is," said Dr. Elias Ghanem, chairman of the Nevada Athletic Commission. "They call him Iron Mike, but we're going to have to wait and see."

Last year, in the wake of the aborted ending of the richest fight in boxing history, the commission banned Tyson from the sport and fined him \$3 million.

This time, though, the decision is complicated by another matter, and the timing couldn't be worse for Tyson. He is accused of attacking two men after a car accident last month in a suburban Washington. He faces criminal charges that threaten his Indiana probation on a

rape conviction.

"The whole issue is his temper and self-control," Ghanem said. "Everything that has happened since we revoked his license we have to find out about."

Tyson, who at the last moment pulled out of an ill-fated attempt to get licensed in New Jersey in August, will personally plead his case. He needs at least three votes from the five-member commission, and the burden of proof is on him alone.

Tyson has been seeing a Denver psychiatrist who will speak on his behalf.

The boxer tried to help his case Thursday by appearing at a luncheon honoring Ghanem and Nevada Gov. Bob Miller and shaking the hands of commission members.

If Tyson is turned down, he will have to wait until Sept. 19, 1999 to reapply. The revocation applies to Nevada alone, but other states have so far abided by it and are likely to do so. Tyson is 32 and conceivably could fight in another country, but he would risk future licensing.

Ghanem signaled this week that the commission would question Tyson not only about the Holyfield bout but about last month's altercation.

"He'll have to prove to the commission he has rehabilitated and he can live by its rules and regulations."



Everton's Marco Materazzi (R) cannot stop Hamilton Ricard from scoring Middlesbrough's first goal at The Riverside in Middlesbrough. The match ended 2-2 (AP photo)

McGwire slams 64th homer

MILWAUKEE (AFP) — St. Louis slugger reclaimed sole possession of the all-time Major League Baseball home run record here Friday against Milwaukee by slamming his 64th homer of the season.

McGwire blasted a three-ball, one-strike pitch from rookie left-hander Rafael Roque into the left-center field bleachers in the fourth inning to break a deadlock with Dominican star

Sammy Sosa of the Chicago Cubs.

The two-run blast, McGwire's 14th off a southpaw this season, equalized for the Cardinals at 2-2.

It was McGwire's first home run since Tuesday, when he connected off another southpaw, Jason Christiansen of Pittsburgh. Sosa matched McGwire at

63 homers on Wednesday with a dramatic grand slam at San Diego that gave the Cubs a 6-3 victory.

Milwaukee pitchers have played a key role in the McGwire-Sosa home-run derby. This was McGwire's third homer off Brewers' pitchers, who have surrendered an astonishing 10 to Sosa.

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SIGNS OF FIELD: Hundred road signs are placed in front of the St Hedwig Cathedral in Berlin, Wednesday. The art installation made by Munich architect Hermann Grub is called Feldzeichen (signs of field) and will be shown until October 7 as part of the current exhibition 'Berlin city in the countryside' (AFP photo)

SAN JOSE (AFP) — A seven-year-old California girl whose laughter tickled the fancy of judges has won the title of "America's Best Giggler" in a nationwide contest. Jessica Adona won \$50,000 in the 10-contestant finale of the Pillsbury company's "giggle-off" designed to promote the firm's well-known logo, the bashful Doughboy and celebrate laughter.

[illegible]